



*Mr. D. Conway*

*Portrait of Mr. D. Conway by J. B. Smith*

AUTOBIOGRAPHY  
MEMORIES AND EXPERIENCES  
OF  
MONCURE DANIEL CONWAY

WITH TWO PORTRAITS

VOLUME I.

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## DEDICATION AND PREFACE.

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THE first words of this work were written in New York, July, 1897, and consisted of its dedication

"TO ELLEN DANA CONWAY.

"In response to your desire, my wife, I undertake to record the more salient recollections of my life. It is a life you have made happy, and never unhappy save by the failure of your health: its experiences during forty years have been yours also, and on the counsel and judgment which have never been wanting at my side I can happily still rely in living over again in our joint memory the events deemed worthy of record.

"Let me obey my own heart, and secure the favour of many hearts that have known your friendship and witnessed your life, in America and Europe, by writing your name on a work as yet unwritten, to which—because it is an enterprise near your heart—I now dedicate myself."

This dedication is now to a memory.

My wife died on Christmas Day, 1897. But the joint memory on which I had depended has not been altogether wanting; among her papers I found a sort of journal, and in this and her letters to relatives she has continued to help me.

Many valued friends in America and Europe, and even several journals, have also called for my reminiscences, and I have felt it a fair demand on the closing years of a surviving witness to developments and events which have made momentous chapters of history. The wisdom or unwisdom of a new generation must largely depend on its knowledge and interpretation of the facts and forces that operated in the generations preceding, from which are bequeathed influences that become increasingly potent when shaped in accepted history. The eventualities of life brought me into close connection with some large movements of my time, and also with incidents little noticed when they occurred, which time has proved of more far-reaching effect than the immediately imposing events. I have been brought into personal relations with leading minds and characters which

already are becoming quasi-classic figures to the youth around and already show the usual tendency of such figures to be themselves with mythology. But, as the psalmist asks, who understand his own errors? Perhaps none of us completely; when, as life draws to a close, a man reviews closely the road he travelled, he can understand many of his errors; and if they not due to any bias of official position or of any ambition for his impressions of events and of men, however erroneous, be part of his testimony, if given with the same independence and candour.

I might, perhaps, have sufficiently met the general interest of a narrative of this kind by writing a history of my own times, instead of an autobiography. This would have saved me from the disadvantage of using the personal pronoun "I" so much, and the implication *Quantum magis parum*. But a public teacher, so far as he understands his errors, should try and correct them. In my mind of a half-century I have placed myself, or been placed, on record in advocacy of contradictory beliefs and ideas. A pilgrimage from pro-slavery to anti-slavery enthusiasm, from Methodism to Free thought, implies a career of contradictions. One who starts out twenty to think for himself and pursue truth is likely to discover at seventy that one-third of his life was given to error, another third to exchanging it for other error, and the last third to efforts to undo the errors and undo the mistakes of the other two-thirds. Opinions may indeed be of interest or importance to only a small circle, but out of this circle may arise one or another whose influence may become large. If one has published works that may be questioned on opposite sides of various issues, he is under obligation to point out the steps by which he was led from one to the other, even though he may know of none that his silence would mislead.

I know well that my work is unsatisfactory. It could not possibly be either chronological or complete. To master thoroughly and report rightly the memories distributed in thousands of papers accumulated in two eventful generations by a participant in their storm and stress would require another lifetime. Among innumerable statements some inaccuracies can hardly be escaped, especially when many of those whose scrutiny was needed are in their graves. Nevertheless I have through nearly four years assiduously cut at my task, spared no pains to be exact and just; and I now send forth my work with the solemn feeling natural to an old author uttering his last word to mankind.

# THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MONCURE D. CONWAY.

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## CHAPTER I.

My Own People—The Browns and Stones of Maryland—Thomas Stone, signer of the Declaration—Moncures, Daniels, and Conways of Virginia—Peytons and Washingtons—The Liberal Principles of my Forebears.

THE lonely corner of the world where I was born (17 March, 1832) is in Stafford County, Virginia, about fifteen miles from Falmouth. My parents were Walker Peyton Conway and Margaret Eleanor Daniel, married in 1829, he being then twenty-four, she twenty-two. I was their second child. The name of my birth-house, long gone to decay, was "Middleton," chosen no doubt by my mother, whose great-grandfather, Dr. Gustavus Brown, so named his American residence in Maryland, after the family homestead near Dalkeith, Scotland. This physician, Laird of Mainside, settled in Charles County, Maryland, in 1708, and by his second wife, the widow Margaret Boyd, *née* Fowke, of Staffordshire, had two children: Dr. Gustavus Brown, of "Rose Hill," and Margaret, who married the Hon. Thomas Stone of Maryland, signer of the Declaration of Independence.

Thomas and Margaret Stone resided near Port Tobacco, in a mansion called "Havre de Venture," and had two daughters; one of whom, Mildred, married Travers Daniel, Jr., of the Virginia Legislature, the other, Margaret, his brother, Dr. John Moncure Daniel, U.S.A., my mother's father.

The father of these brothers, Travers Daniel of "Crow's

Nest," had married Frances Moncure, daughter of Rev. John Moncure, whose wife was Frances Brown, daughter of Dr. Gustavus Brown of "Rose Hill."

The Moncures were of French origin—the family, according to tradition, having been swept into Great Britain by the troubles following the Reformation, with which they sympathised. My great-great-grandfather, John Moncure, went to Virginia (1733) from County Kincardine, Scotland. The name in Scotland is Moncur, and supposed to be from "*mon cœur*," the coat of arms being three hearts. I suspect the name of having been bestowed symbolically by some assembly of French Protestants on their warm-hearted pastor. One of John's daughters, Anne, married my great-grandfather, Walker Conway, whose first name was borne by my father. I am thus descended from two of the old rector's daughters, and whenever I enter France feel the heraldic hearts bounding in me.

The Daniel family, connected by Hayden with the Daniels of Wigan, County Lancaster, England, first appear in Virginia in 1634. They had large grants of land, were generally professional men, and active in the affairs of the colony. My great-great-grandfather, Peter Daniel, when presiding justice of Stafford County, announced to the governor of Virginia that he would resign his office rather than administer the Stamp Act, a step rendered unnecessary by its repeal. His wife was daughter of Raleigh Travers, by his wife Hannah Ball, half-sister of Washington's mother.

The founder of our Conway race in Virginia was Edwin, who with his wife—*née* Martha Eltonhead—came from England in 1640 and settled in Lancaster County. He was a kinsman of Viscount Edward Conway of Conway Castle and Killeltah, and used the arms: *Sable on a band argent cotised ermine, a rose gules between two annulets of the last*. Crest: *A Moor's head sidefaced ppr., banded round the temples ar. and az.* Motto: *Fide et amore*. The Virginia race is extensive, and has intermarried with most of the historic families of Virginia.\*

\* General Conway of the American Revolution was a Frenchman. The English General Conway, who in the House of Commons first moved the withdrawal of George III.'s armies from America, was a kinsman of the Virginia Conways.

Virginia democracy forbade us to derive from our ancestors any dignity. But now and then a few fruits fell from the forbidden family tree in the shape of anecdotes or traditions, which I picked up. Several of these related to the "Precious Stones" of Maryland, as my mother fondly called them. The first of that family in America, William Stone, had come to Virginia, and was induced by Lord Baltimore to become the governor of Maryland, where he arrived in 1649. This selection was made because the Catholic Proprietary desired a Protestant governor free from prejudice against Catholics. Governor Stone's task was to open the doors of Maryland to all religions. The Puritans flocked to Maryland; but Cromwell's commissioners, sent to Virginia, claimed Maryland, and in trying to defend the charter of the Proprietary (1655), Governor Stone was wounded and thrown into prison, and would have been executed, but "was after saved by the Enemies owne souldiers." Such is the account of his wife, Verlinda Stone, whose narrative of these events in Maryland, addressed to Lord Baltimore in England, is not only a document of historical importance, but written with notable literary ability.

The error of the governor and council was that they went to parley with the invaders, accompanied by a small party of soldiers. The messengers they sent were held. The Protector's commission ought simply to have been asked for their authority by the governor himself, unarmed. His descendants became leading men in Maryland. Thomas Stone, signer of the Declaration of Independence, was Maryland's darling statesman. In his home at Port Tobacco, "Havre de Venture" (still in the family, 1903), he drafted a republican constitution for Maryland. Thomas Stone was elected to the Constitutional Convention of 1787, but never took his seat. Just then his fair sky was fatally overcast; his young wife died from the sequels of inoculation. He sank into melancholy, and his physician persuaded him to visit Europe. For that purpose he engaged passage on a packet at Alexandria, but on the eve of sailing died—of a broken heart.

Trumbull, in painting the Signing of the Declaration of Independence, has engraved on the American mind a scene that never occurred, the Congress never having signed in a body.

but in a straggling way through seven or eight months. Trumbull has also included the portrait of a Livingston who did not sign, and omitted that of Thomas Stone, who did sign. The artist excused this by saying that he could not find Stone's portrait—but he could have found it by inquiring for the signer's heirs. The portraits of Thomas Stone and his wife were carried by their daughter Margaret to Virginia when she married my grandfather, and by my mother's gift they now belong to my sister Mildred, the wife of Dr. F. A. March of Lafayette College, Easton, Pa.

My grandfather, Dr. John Moncure Daniel, while studying medicine and surgery in Edinburgh, made the acquaintance there of a boarding-school girl, Miss Niven, daughter of an English naval officer. The youth called on her several times in the free Virginia fashion, but discovered that the young lady's name had been compromised by his visits. Thereon he promptly proposed to marry her; and as she was already enamoured, and her lover's social credentials were excellent, no difficulty arose in Edinburgh. But "Crow's Nest," Virginia, was in distress. Travers Daniel, shocked that his son should marry before entering on his profession, or even reaching his majority, insisted on a postponement. The son gave a score of reasons why that could not be; the father became stern, and wrote that the lady would wed a penniless man; the young man answered that where honour was involved money weighed nothing. So the young surgeon came to Virginia with his bride; and when his father saw the beautiful little lady his heart went out to her. He set his son well up with house and office at Dumfries, Virginia. But the lady died within a year, and her name only remained in our family, being that of her husband's eldest daughter by his second wife, Margaret Stone. The last time I ever saw this beloved aunt, Jean Niven Crane, we sat together reading the letters that passed between father and son in that affair at Edinburgh.

The second Dr. Gustavus Brown in Maryland, brother of Mrs. Thomas Stone, resided at "Rose Hill," near by, and established there a medical school. He was a devoted friend of General Washington, and there is a tradition that the General occasionally escaped from the threat of British capture through

down the river to "Rose Hill." My mother told me of her grand-uncle's night ride when a messenger from Mount Vernon summoned him to attend Washington in his last illness. Two horses were broken down in that gallop to the landing opposite Mount Vernon, where he arrived seven hours before Washington's death.

The General, who had escaped guns and swords in a seven years' war, succumbed to the lancet. So Dr. Gustavus Brown believed, and wrote, January 2, 1800, to Dr. Craik, Washington's family physician, that he thought their bleeding the sufferer was the fatal mistake. Thenceforth he discarded the lancet altogether.

My paternal great-grandparents, Dr. Valentine Peyton and Mary Butler Washington, his wife, resided at "Tusculum," several miles from Stafford Court House, and their home was famous for its luxurious hospitalities and festivities. The history of the Peyton family both in England and Virginia is told in the work of Mr. Chester Waters, "The Chesters of Chicheley." Dr. Peyton was a brilliant man intellectually, a man of the world, a fine flute-player, and his wife distinguished for her wit and her elegance of dress and manners. She was the sister of Colonel William Washington, who during the Revolution declined the title of General, saying, "There can be but one General Washington." Their father was Baily Washington, son of Henry, who was son of John, the brother of General Washington's grandfather, Lawrence. George Washington's great-grandfather was thus Mrs. Peyton's great-great-grandfather.\* General Washington appointed Colonel William Washington commander of the entire South when war with France was expected.

Mr. Francis Galton's works on Heredity put before me in a new form the catechetical question, "Who made you?" Only when I was beginning to turn grey was any curiosity awakened in me to know how it was that I should carry the names of three large families into association with religious and political heresies

\* See the will of Henry Washington, published by Hayden (*Virginia Genealogies*, p. 519), and the will of Mrs. Martha Hayward, sister of Colonel John Washington, the immigrant, discovered by Worthington C. Ford (*New York Times*, Dec. 1, 1891).

unknown to my contemporary Virginians except as distant horrors. Who, then, made me?

When my unorthodoxy began to be conscious I reflected on an incident that occurred when I was about twelve. I was at the house of John Wheatley of Wheatleyville, Culpeper County, Virginia, whose wife was grandmother Conway's sister, when my grandparents came on a visit. To my grandfather, John Moncure Conway, everybody looked up; he was a scholar (graduate of William and Mary, 1800), and a serious man. While reading on the veranda my ear caught these words spoken by grandfather to his brother-in-law: "I cannot believe that the father of mankind would send any human being into this world knowing that he would be damned." I could hardly appreciate the remark, but it was marked in my memory, and also the silence of devout uncle Wheatley. From this time I knew that in some way grandfather Conway had a religion different from that of others. He and grandmother never talked to me about religion, nor about keeping the Sabbath and saying my prayers. Although a vestryman of Aquia church (unused during his later years), he attended no church, nor were he and grandmother ever "confirmed." There was Methodist preaching in the court-house every Sunday, but grandfather never attended, and generally passed the morning in his office.\*

In 1751 Denis Conway, deputy-sheriff of Northumberland County, Virginia, was fined several thousand pounds of tobacco for non-attendance at church. He gave no explanation for his abstinence. Probably he was one of those Broad churchmen who preferred getting their Sunday instruction from the free-thinking prelates Tillotson and Jeremy Taylor. Although Dean Swift was the only survivor into the eighteenth century of that grand race of clergymen in England, it found a nest in William and Mary College, Virginia. The rationalists were known as the "Illuminati"; and, although after the Revolution their light

\* One Sunday when leaving his office for dinner, he saw a gentleman angrily bundled out of the only inn in the place because he had devoted the morning to a walk instead of going to church; he took the "Sabbath-breaker" to his house and entertained him several days. The guest was A. Brownson Alcott, the Emersonian philosopher, who told me the story.

was hid under the democratic bushel, even in my time—ah, had I known it!—there remained some representatives of the “*Illuminati*,” such as grandfather Conway.

I have found, too, that my maternal forbears, the Daniels, were not all orthodox. My mother’s uncle, Walter Daniel, left a Bible in which there is in his writing a marginal note to Judges i., 19: “The Lord was with Judah; and he drave out the inhabitants of the hill country; for he could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley because they had chariots of iron.” Uncle Walter adds: “Not omnipotent after all!”

My great-great-grandfather, John Moncure, for twenty-six years rector of our parish (Overwharton), died in 1765, but left his legend which lasted over a hundred years. Descended, according to a tradition, from a Huguenot whose conscience led him from joyous France to the bleak hills of Calvinism and Scotland, he migrated to Virginia in youth as a teacher, and though he was persuaded by an aged parson, Alexander Scott, to return to England for holy orders and help him in Overwharton parish, John could never make himself other than a merry fox-hunting gentleman, assiduous cultivator of literature, flowers, and of gay young people. He was a famous whist player. One Saturday evening when his game was interrupted by a deputation of farmers requesting that he would next day pray for rain, he promptly said, “Yes, I’ll read the prayer, but it isn’t going to rain till the moon changes.”

Can I not pick my sceptical soul out of these old people?

I came also by my antislavery principles fairly. My great-grandfather, Travers Daniel, of “Crow’s Nest,” presiding justice of Stafford County, was an ardent emancipationist, and had not the laws of Virginia hampered the manumission of negroes in various ways, he would have liberated his slaves. He imported from England in his ship *The Crow* (whence “Crow’s Nest,” name of his house) window curtains representing Granville Sharp striking chains from negroes, and displayed them around his house. Neighbours warned him that his slaves would be excited by the curtains and leave him, but he simply replied that it would be a relief. He died in 1824. My mother remembered the curtains.

Travers Daniel and General Wood married daughters of

Rev. John Moncure, and no doubt had the sympathy of their father-in-law in anti-slavery work. General Wood was an eminent governor of Virginia, and from 1798 president of the Virginia "Society for promoting the abolition of Slavery, and protecting those Illegally held in Bondage." This society was affiliated with the original society formed in Philadelphia under the presidency of Franklin just after the publication, March 8, 1775, of Thomas Paine's plea for immediate emancipation.

Such was my pre-natal constitution. I was born of people opposed to slavery, and when in my twenty-second year my rôle seemed to many Virginians that of the Prodigal Son, it was the new proslavery Virginian who was the Prodigal, while my part was that of the father at home mourning for the wanderer.

Our patriarchal Peter Humstead, who had belonged to my mother's father, was never weary of telling me of the frightful blizzard on my birthnight, when between midnight and morning he rode the fifteen miles to Falmouth and the same distance back with the doctor.

My mother told me that it was for a time doubtful whether I would live. There was not one Catholic in the county to ascribe my preservation to birth on the day of St. Patrick. But probably no Catholic country witnessed, in the same year, 1832, a wilder outbreak of popular superstition than that which throughout our county responded to the memorable display of "shooting stars." The ignorant people leaped with notable unanimity to the belief that Judgment Day was at hand, and crowded to the door of every discoverable preacher, imploring intercession and prayers.

school. I was lifted to a table and read sentences from a primer. The praise they gave me, and our teacher's kiss, planted a new fruit in our paradise. I was then probably in my fifth year. Then a log schoolhouse was built halfway between Inglewood and Glencairn.

My next remembrance is seeing my newborn sister, Mildred, who was born January 23, 1837.

My more consecutive memories begin with a tragical day in 1838, when from the schoolhouse window we saw Inglewood wrapped in flames. My parents were at the house of a neighbour; the only member of our family in the house was my year-old sister, whom our nurse Maria deposited in a field remote from danger. The house was reduced to ashes.

We then moved into Falmouth, where my father bought the residence afterwards known as Conway House. It is a brick house fronting the Rappahannock—the largest residence in Falmouth. It was built by a Mr. Vasa, of Dutch family, and the wallpaper in the drawing-room was a continuous scene in Rotterdam, with a canal in which women were washing clothes, children playing beside it, and barges plying on it. This decoration lasted until the house was used as a war hospital, 1862-63. At the back the house opened through porches on a flower garden embowered with aspens and fig-trees, there being also a superb Judas-tree; beyond the outhouses the vegetable garden, bordered with box and myrtle, extended to a succession of steep terraces, with midway an arbour of roses, morning-glories, and honeysuckle—the haunt of humming-birds.

These terraces were relics of fortifications built in 1675 against the aborigines, this being the origin of Falmouth. The military heritage of the little town was displayed a hundred years after its foundation; it was the first place in Virginia to raise a company against Great Britain. Threescore years later the colonial belligerency survived only in parades of little boys, in blue and white, with wooden guns, on the hill above our terraces. Alas! how many of them reached manhood only to be laid in the Confederate cemetery!

A sister was born, and named Catherine Washington. She lived only ten days. My mother sent for me to come to her bedside, and tried to explain the mysterious event. I remember

vividly her pale face on the pillow, her tears, and her effort to make me comprehend.

My father did not part with Inglewood farm, and we continued to go out there to school, walking the two miles each way daily. We were accompanied by a mulatto youth, Charles Humstead. Handsome, brilliant, merry, with an inexhaustible store of stories and songs, this coloured genius was the most romantic figure of our little world. Along the pathway through the woods his snares and "hare-gums" were set, and rarely failed of their prey. A meadow we had to cross was the haunt of mocassin snakes, and his skill in slaying these dragons guarding our tree of knowledge was wonderful. That indeed was his main function. Advancing ahead of us, stick in hand, treading warily with his bare feet, his eye could not be cheated by the deadly reptile's mimicry of clay, nor did he fail to strike the point on its back that left it helpless.

Charles knew all serpent lore. The tail would not die until sunset, or until it thundered. If rain was needed he hung the snake on a tree. In studying myths of Indra, thunderer and rain-giver, and of the drouth-serpent Ahi, I have often remembered those bits of the oriental fable rehearsed by our coloured comrade in the woods of Virginia.

But alas! we had to part from Charles. He found our little town dull, and the devil tempted him in the form of a rusty fire-engine which had remained in its dismantled shanty many years. It occurred to Charles, aged seventeen, that it would be fun to see the engine work, and he set fire to a dilapidated out-house near by. Although this small house was not in use, nor near any other, it was claimed that sparks from it might have reached dwellings; and the alternatives for Charles were a severe—possibly capital—punishment, or sale to a plantation far South. Much to the sorrow of our household, Charles was carried away, this being the only instance of my father's selling a servant. After the war I made inquiries for Charles without result, and believe he would have returned to Falmouth had he been living.

Falmouth is a picturesque town, seated amid heights crowned with pretty homesteads, and contained then about a thousand people. It may be a survival of local pride that prevents my

calling it a village. About twenty families might have been described fifty years ago as belonging to the old "gentry." Their houses though not grand were pretty, with tasteful interiors and beautiful gardens. Several families were wealthy, the Cœsus being Basil Gordon, who came from Scotland a poor boy and became the richest man in Virginia. This Basil Gordon, who resided next door to us, was the most picturesque figure of that region. To the end of life he wore the powdered wig and queue, ruffled shirt, flowing white cravat, dress-coat, knee-breeches, shoe-buckles. He had in youth set up a small store for the sale of various articles, and earned money enough to purchase wheat brought in long bonneted wagons from the rich Piedmont region; he had it made into flour in the Falmouth mill, and shipped it on the Rappahannock for England. When a fortune was thus made, his family wished him to give up the tiny shop, but he kept it in order to give employment to his many young relatives who had to be started in business. It was a practical joke among the wags to watch the hour when the old gentleman visited the store, and the clerks were off at his large warehouses, to go in and call for some trifle—such as a half-pound of sugar or coffee—which the venerable millionaire would weigh out with gravity and dignity. His only daughter, Anne, was a famous beauty, and married Dr. John Hanson Thomas of Baltimore. The greater part of Basil Gordon's fortune was inherited by his eldest son, Douglas, an intellectual man, who was friendly to me in my boyhood.

Basil Gordon was well acquainted with Mary Washington, and I was told that he had been a pallbearer at her funeral; also that when her monument was to be erected at Fredericksburg he identified the spot where she was buried. Recently, however, when the quaint and pretty monument of 1832, the most interesting in Virginia, was destroyed by sentimental vandals from other States to make way for an ugly obelisk, the grave was dug into and no trace of any burial or remains found. So that the exact grave of Washington's mother remains unknown.

Falmouth had a rough corner, owing to a superabundance of whiskey. On Saturdays, when it was congested by country-folk, we were not permitted to go into that part. Many of the country-folk had to depend on the sobriety of their horses or

mules to carry them home. My father, presiding justice of Stafford County, was a "total abstainer," and a prohibitionist long before the Maine law was heard of. He made an impressive appeal to his fellow magistrates in court to stop the sale of strong liquors, just after a drunken man, trying to draw water from a well, fell in and was drowned. But the era of paternal legislation had not arrived.

Our region swarmed with those called "poor whites," largely descended, I always believe, from the convict and contract labourers imported from Great Britain in colonial times. Gradually supplanted by slaves, left without occupation, they "squatted" where they could and lived as they could. They became expert in fishing and hunting, and their skill in shooting made them good soldiers in the Confederate War. As concerned their means, they were more benefited by defeat than they could have been by triumph—much more benefited than were the poor negroes. With the abolition of unpaid labour their opportunity for employment returned. Moreover, many of the "gentry" became "poor whites" also, and that phrase is heard no more. It was always a phrase forbidden in genteel families, for these "poor whites" had votes, and I remember a campaign in which my father's candidate (Democratic) for the Legislature was nearly defeated because he (my father) had said, "The masses will follow their leaders."

Party spirit ran high in Stafford County, where the majority of well-to-do gentlemen were Whigs, the majority of voters Democrats. I remember exciting scenes in Falmouth during the presidential campaign of 1840, which resulted in defeat of the Democrats. The Democratic candidate was Martin Van Buren, an aristocratic Knickerbocker, while the Whigs had this time the advantage of a candidate (William Henry Harrison) who, though of the old Virginia gentry, had migrated in early life to the West, and there resided in a log cabin. That log cabin was the ace with which the Whigs trumped the Democracy in our county. The cabin was blazoned everywhere. When the grandson of that Whig President, the late Benjamin Harrison, was a candidate, nothing was said of his grandfather's cabin, but much of the Harrison pedigree.

The party contests were accompanied by bonfires, mass

meetings, and barbecues. The children were warm partisans of their parental preferences, and many a lagot did I add to the Polk-and-Dallas bonfire of 1844. James Knox Polk thus became President, though we Democratic boys of Falmouth frankly admitted that in securing this victory we received aid from adjacent parts of the nation. The defeated candidate was the famous Henry Clay. I remember soon afterwards observing on grandfather Conway's wall a framed letter written to him by Henry Clay, whom he esteemed above all other statesmen. It was a momentous discovery that the two men I honoured most—father and grandfather—were antagonistic in a great issue. However, they were both lukewarm in politics. My father had once been the party leader, and represented Stafford in the Virginia Legislature; but one such experience was enough; he declined a second candidature, and contented himself with insisting on the nomination of competent men. He was offered in youth a place at West Point, but declined it, and in later life declined an offer of high office at Washington.

My father, a tall and handsome man, was universally esteemed, and singularly free from ambition. His integrity and prudence caused him to be burdened by the estates bequeathed to his administration and the families left to his guardianship. In youth he had been gay—much in demand at card parties and dances. He was particularly beloved by his Peyton grandparents, and mingled in the festivities of "Tusculum." But there was among the pious negroes a story which indicated that his grandmother Peyton could not rest quiet in her grave because of the gaiety of "P," as she called him, which she had encouraged. Once, so our oldest negro told me, when he ("Mars Peyton") was returning in the night from a frolic, and riding past the graveyard, his grandmother came out and walked beside him some distance, entreating him to become religious. (The old lady herself was not confirmed until she was sixty, and her children were never confirmed at all.) Of course, I never mentioned this tale to my father, who scorned every superstition not found in the Bible.

That a gay and handsome youth of high social position should all at once unite himself to the poor and ignorant Methodists, of course implied a miracle, but I have a notion that

the ghost story had been gradually transferred and developed from an incident grandfather Conway related to us of himself. While studying law with Judge James Henry of Fleete's Bay, he was sent on a horseback journey to Stafford Court House. His journey was broken at an inn, where in the early morning, before he had risen, he saw a young lady pass through his room and vanish. At the Court House he was invited by Dr. Peyton to meet the judge and lawyers at his house in the evening. When he entered, there stood the lady of his vision, daughter of his host. "I knew at once that she was to be my wife; and there," he would add, pointing to grandmother, "there she sits." Grandmother was apt to add some playful explanation.

If any lady was influential in my father's "conversion," she was not from a graveyard, but was Miss Margaret Eleanor Daniel, who became his wife. Her father died while serving as army surgeon in the War of 1812, leaving her to the care of her stepmother—an amiable lady whom I well remember—who placed her under the care of John Lewis of Llangollen, my mother's uncle by marriage, who trained young men for college.\* He supervised her education with care, but his wife (my mother's aunt) was a tyrannous Calvinist. My mother told me that she was kept in a sort of hothouse of Presbyterianism; and when her precocious soul revolted against the dogma of predestination, it was decided that she was ill and must be bled. Calvin was thus surviving in Virginia, and still demanding the blood of all gainsayers. It may readily be understood that she would not be suffered to wed a gay and worldly youth, and also that falling in love with a pious young lady would naturally sober such a youth.

At the time of my parents' marriage, May 28, 1829, the Episcopal Church was nearly defunct in our Overwharton parish. Of its three churches—Potomac, Aquia, and Cedar church in Falmouth—the former had fallen into ruin, Aquia was without regular services, and Cedar church turned into a grain storehouse

\* John Lewis published a volume of poems, and also a clever tale of the Great Kanawha, *Young Kate; or, The Rescue*. About 1846 he moved to Kentucky, where he died in 1853, and where his descendants still reside. His affection for my parents led him a few years before his death to make the then difficult journey from Kentucky to Falmouth.

## THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF

...suddenly swept away by a freshet. The Methodists occupied the country, and preachers were sent by the Baltimore Conference. At the camp meetings eloquent preachers from the north attended, and under one of these orators my father was converted. His father was so shocked that a son should be converted away by what he regarded as vulgar fanaticism that money was refused, and my father, who had barely reached his majority, left the paternal home. Grandfather speedily repented of his anger, but the touch of martyrdom brought to my father a noble theme of his sisters and two of his brothers. Thus I was that year firmly became Methodist, the first of good stock produced in that region belonging to that sect. My mother gladly embraced the American faith of the Methodists, and used to quote with warm approval the negro hymn —

"I never found no peace nor joy  
Till I join the Methodists."

My grandfather, John Moncure Conway, was for forty-seven years clerk of Stafford County. He had in advanced years abandoned the quaker, but always wore a blue dress-coat with blue breeches, a ruffled shirt front, and an ample white cravat with ends showing through a large gold ring. His house

"Bachelor," at Stafford Court House, had a carefully kept flower garden in front, and a meadow beyond it was his large well-stocked lawn, where he liked to stand before breakfast. On it was a wonderful dog that recognized any alien hog or sheep strayed into his hands, and drove it off. He was glad to take me with him on his early walks, and his talk was always instructive. In his office was framed a fine engraving of Conway Castle, Wales, an heirloom brought from England by his American ancestors. He was a perfect domestic character, and regarded with boundless affection by his children and grandchildren. My grandparents had thirteen children, of whom eight had families.

My grandmother (née Catherine Stokes Peyton) was to her numerous grandchildren the queen of the whole world. When any national holiday came the joy of it was that they were to go to "Bachelor," and how so many children were packed away at night or day after day. On one side of the house was a playground, and on the other a meadow, and under the apple trees, with

cake and molasses, bonny-clabber, preserves. Our aunts attended us, and near by sat "grandma"—tall, stately, eyes sparkling with humour, her head crowned with a snowy turban, clasped with a ruby and a rose.

My grandfather's first love was for Agnes Conway Moncure, but these lovers were double first cousins, and their elders regarded the consanguinity as too close for marriage.\* Agnes married John Robinson, clerk of the Circuit Court of Richmond.† Affectionate relations between the Robinsons and my Conway grandparents continued to their death, and I was told by a relative that whenever Mrs. Robinson visited her Moncure relatives in Stafford County, my grandmother used to find some pretext for sending her husband over to the place of her sojourn without accompanying him. He must stay away a day or two while she got the house ready for Mrs. Robinson's visit! The Hon. Henry Clay was in youth a deputy clerk under John Robinson.

The school taught by cousin Betty Gaskins became large, various neighbours being permitted to send their children. I could not mingle quite freely with either boys or girls. My brother Peyton and I were the only Methodist children, and even in my eighth year I was precocious enough to feel that I had a soul. This poor little soul shrank from the careless frolic of my playmates, who no doubt regarded me as a milksop. But I had the compensation of the special friendship of my aunt Harriet Eustace Conway—only four years my senior—to whom the whole school looked up. She died early, and is enshrined in my memory as a perfectly beautiful being.

My parents, well read in Methodist theology, held strong views against fatalism, but there is a fatality also in the "free will" faith: it involves being constantly looked after. The Presbyterian children, whose conduct and destiny were already fixed, enjoyed more freedom than we who were every moment determining our eternal weal or woe. We were under a rigid

\* Walker and Anne Conway, brother and sister, married John and Anne Moncure, brother and sister, these being the parents of the lovers, who were born in the same neighbourhood in Stafford County.

† They were the parents of the late Conway Robinson, of Washington, jurist and historian, and Moncure Robinson, of Philadelphia, eminent civil engineer and railway president.

regime. Two sermons every Sunday besides Sunday school and only strictly religious reading permitted on that day—the fourth page of the "Christian Advocate" being prohibited because it was literary and scientific. Our small affairs, at such times, were ascribed everlasting importance, and we lived in the suspended sword of Judgment Day.

The basement of my father's house in Falmouth was taken up for evening prayer meetings, which were held there every week. They were usually conducted by the town and local preachers James Petty. I find the scene engraved on my memory: that fine, intellectual father of mine, accustomed to preside over courts, and the refined, elegantly dressed friends whom he surrounded by poor, dusty, patched people, of whom some could hardly read. My father had no interests to minister by that devotion to an humble faith, no clients to gain, no work to seek. his office was not elective, his interests were all other way, for the preachers were supported and the meeting-house built mainly out of his purse. Some of these gathered in the basement he had picked up out of the ditch. I looked up to him with reverence, but in humility he surpassed them all. Somewhere I to this day think of my handsome father appearing as modest when seated among those dingy, dissipated people.

My mother was musical and had a fine soprano voice; I developed early a taste and some voice for singing. It was through the beautiful Methodist hymns that religious fervor reached me. As I sang in the basement second treble to my mother, I dreamed of the distant beauties of Palestine, the thickets of Lebanon were thick on our Falmouth hills, the roses of Sharon were equalled those of our garden. I saw Lebanon's cedar trees at our doors, and our fig-trees, myrtle bushes, mandarin, crystal streams, all the materials of a paradise were around me while I sang of things far off and never to be attained.

### CHAPTER III.

Our Servants—"The Preacher's Room" in our House—Folklore—The Falmouth Witch—Watch Night—Methodist Régime—Camp-meetings—Immersion of the Blacks—Treatment of Slaves—Reading the Bible—The Serpent—Visiting Richmond Relatives—Entertainments in Fredericksburg—The Tournament.

THE rod was spared in our home, as well for servants as for the white children. My parents regarded coloured people as immortal souls, and we were trained to treat them with kindness. Every Sunday an hour was found for us—white and black children together—to be taught by my mother the catechism and listen to careful selections from the Bible. In some way this equal treatment of slaves got out, and some officious men came with a report that my mother was teaching negroes to read, which was illegal. It was not true, but it was prudent to avoid even the suspicion of such an offence in the house of a magistrate; so the mixed teaching ceased. But the cause was kept from me, and about that time I taught one of our slaves—Peter Humstead, about twenty—to read. Why he asked to have his lessons in the wood-cellar I did not understand. I must add that my lessons were not given gratuitously: Peter knew my weakness for fine clothes and contracted to give me a splendid necktie, duly paid and by me displayed—the first mannish thing I ever wore. I have a dim remembrance that this finery brought some ridicule on me, and was not enjoyed long; but Peter Humstead learned to read.

My mother's prayers were earnest and even eloquent. In the prayer-meetings in our basement she was always called on after my father to pray, and in his absence she conducted family prayers. Her voice was sympathetic and her command of language wonderful. Had she been born a Quaker she would probably have been a famous minister in that society. In the Methodist "Love Feasts," where the "experiences" uttered

were usually cant, my mother opened her heart with almost passionate fervour.

A large room was set apart in our house as "The Preacher's Room," and it was rarely unoccupied. The solemn black garb, white cravats, and broad-brims of these guests impressed me; two of the most pious were discovered to be impostors, but the majority were honest, hell-fearing men. Once there stopped with us for a day or two a preacher dressed in extremely coarse homespun, and without any buttons—John Hersey by name. Some of us could not help laughing at his appearance; but he told my father that in early life he had run into debt, which he was endeavouring to pay; he was determined to limit himself to the barest necessities of life, both as to food and clothing, until he had repaid every cent. In later years I heard him—still in homespun garb—preach an eloquent sermon in Georgetown.

The Rev. Jesse White had the look and reputation of a saint. One day when he was seated with my father in our front hall, a man rushed up the steps and said to Mr. White, "I am grievously tormented by a devil; I beseech you cast him out of me." The meek minister said, "My friend, I have no such power." "Oh, yes, you have," said the possessed one; "you have only to order him, he will obey." The preacher, by an impulse, cried, "I charge you come out of him!" "Thank you," said the man, "the devil has quite left me," and with a bow went off smiling.

Our Falmouth folk-lore was mostly of the familiar kind—one or two houses "haunted," an occasional ghost reported; but the serpent-lore impressed me because of my firm faith that the Devil was a serpent. A horsehair left in a tub of rainwater would turn to a snake; a snake could charm a bird into his mouth; any deficiency of milk in a cow was ascribed to the "cowsucker" (black snake).

At Tappahannock, lower down on the river, an approaching defeat of the Democratic party at an election was heralded by a phantom scow floating on the river with negroes singing and dancing on it.

Iron rings were worn to cure fits. (George Washington mentions without comment the use of an iron ring at Mount

Vernon to cure Patsy Custis.) Various herbs were used to cure warts, the herb after application being always buried.

Once the seventeen-year locusts swarmed in our woods, devouring the green tissue in every leaf. On each wing was the letter "W," betokening "War," and their united cry of "Pharaoh" prophesied the plagues of Egypt. The locusts came near enough to the Mexican War and to the deadly Spotted Tongue plague that scourged our county, to appear prophetic. But the greatest sensation was caused by the comet of 1843. There was a widespread panic, similar, it was said, to that caused by the meteors of 1832.\* Apprehending the approach of Judgment Day, crowds besieged the shop of Mr. Petty, our preaching tailor, invoking his prayers. Methodism reaped a harvest from the comet. The negroes, however, were not disturbed; they were, I believe, always hoping to hear Gabriel's trump.\*

Belief in witchcraft prevailed among the "poor whites," and negroes, but I never heard of a coloured witch or wizard. Our Falmouth witch was one Nancy Calamese, who lived alone in a small shanty just outside the town. I remember her as a small, thin woman of sixty, with sharp features and a hunted look in her large grey eyes. She could hardly appear in the village without being shunned, and at length the suspicion that she had bewitched several persons caused her to be railed at and stoned on the street. Nancy had a sharp tongue for her pursuers; she drank pretty deeply; but she was never charged with any crime, and her means of subsistence were unknown. No one could tell whence she came, and there was about her a distinction of some kind, as compared with the "poor whites," which seemed to the latter uncanny. The persecutions of this woman excited the sympathy of my mother, who now and then visited her, and told me that she found everything neat in Nancy's shanty, a pretty flower-bed behind it, and the woman herself fairly intelligent. Finally, however, life became intolerable for poor Nancy Calamese. One afternoon, on my return from school,

\* My cousin, Augusta Daniel, told me of one woman who declared in meeting that she had heard Gabriel's trump. There were murmurs of incredulity, and she began to weep at having her word doubted. But the preacher said, "After all, brethren, perhaps Gabriel did give the

I saw a crowd gazing out on the Rappahannock River, where Nancy was steadily wading on, and presently perished. Her history was never known.

My parents were impatient with contemporary superstitions. There was a large house, long uninhabited, on a hill across the river, where our servants said they had seen lights in the night. I mentioned this to my father, and he said, "Jack o' lantern probably," and went on with his papers, leaving me to wonder who Jack was, and what kind of lantern he had. That night I suffered the nightmare of being seized by a goblin, shut up in a lantern, and hurried through the air to the lonely house. It was too terrible to be forgotten, but I was ashamed to mention it. We were taught that belief in ghosts and witches was vulgar, and I sometimes wonder what my parents thought of biblical ghost-lore and the witch of Endor. An instance occurred of a young lady's belief that she had committed the "unpardonable sin," and it was spoken of by my parents as insanity. A very pious Methodist "sister" was said to have attained "entire sanctification," an experience recognised by Methodism; but my parents, much as they esteemed her, were silent, and I feel certain that they regarded it as morbid.

Watch Night was kept in the basement of our house. A minute before midnight of the departing year we all knelt (the servants with us), and, kneeling until after midnight, sang the New Year's hymn, whose opening verses are :—

Come let us anew  
Our journey pursue,  
Roll round with the year  
And never stand still till the Master appear.

His adorable will  
Let us gladly fulfil,  
And our talents improve  
By the patience of hope, and the labour of love.

Some years later we kept Watch Night in the church, but the occasion and the hymn never affected me so much as when we knelt and sang in our basement.

Although my father took his Methodism so seriously, he had a fine sense of humour, and many a hearty laugh did he give us

the revivals he saw a man stagger a little as he went up to the "mourner's bench" to be prayed for. Beckoning Mr. Petty, my father said, "Take that man away, he's drunk!" Petty replied, "Indeed, brother Conway, if we don't get some of these people when they're drunk, we'll not get them at all!" Another story related to a little place called "White Oak," in which it was said not one sober man or woman could be found, and where all sins were considered customary. At length, however, the Methodist preachers—assisted, perhaps, by the comet—got up a revival at White Oak, after which a congregation was organised. But there was difficulty about appointing officers; every "convert" proposed had been notorious as a drunkard, rogue, or wife-beater. After several had been set aside, a man arose and said, "Brethren, it 'pears to me that ef the Lord wants a church at White Oak, he's got to take the materials to be found at White Oak." This suggestion prevailed, and White Oak began a reformation that ultimately improved it off the earth.

But while my parents were amused by its grotesque side, it was I am certain, mainly the work of Methodism among these humble and often laughable people that they valued. Methodism was a temperance organisation, and the only one in our county; it was the only active society for charity and humanitarian effort; it had little or nothing to do with dogmas, but a great deal to do with morality. And in Stafford County it mainly rested on my parents and my three Methodist aunts. None of these realised the way in which I was taking these things to heart nor the extent to which I was burdened by the otherworldliness of our negroes. I was encouraged to take healthy recreations—swimming, fishing, skating, shooting—and restrained only from cards and dancing; but I was sadly serious. I clung to the preachers, to my elders, and sang hymns about the vileness of a world I had not entered, and about death.

The world is all a fleeting show  
For man's delusion given:  
Its smiles of joy, its tears of woe,  
Deceitful shine, deceitful flow,  
There's nothing true but heaven.

I'm a pilgrim, and I'm a stranger,

## THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF

Our life is a dream ;  
Our time as a stream  
Glides swiftly away.

Oh, tell me no more of this world's vain store,  
The time for such trifles with me now is o'er

Hark from the tomb a doleful sound  
My ears attend the cry :  
"Ye living men, come view the ground  
Where you must shortly lie !"

The great function of the year was the Methodist Camp-meeting. My father always had the largest tent in the selected forest, and for over a week there was a grand barbaric picnic. The tents were pitched around a large amphitheatre, where there were benches for several thousand, under arches of small lamps stretched between the trees. Immediately in front of the platform—on which sat a score of preachers—there was a large enclosure for the "mourners." There were three sermons daily, each followed by a prayer-meeting, but the great scene was at night, when there occurred a pitched battle with Satan to rescue souls. The loud excited singing of the throng was thrilling; the preachers walked about the platform crying, "Now is the accepted time!" "Call upon him while he is near!" etc. Brethren went up the forest aisles, watching for any sign of emotion, any bowed head, and one after another "under conviction" was led up to the "throne of grace" to be welcomed by shouts of "Glory!" "Hallelujah!" Every now and then amid the loud pleadings of prayer there was a scream out of some terrified heart, some pale face falling back in swoon or trance, the crowd of curious gazers pressing forward to see. My own curiosity often led me to go behind the platform; there the negroes received such crumbs of grace as fell from the white penitents' table. Nevertheless with these crumbs they had a paradise unknown to white Dives; they had few or no mourners, all of them being long ago "converted," and all now in ecstasy. Their spiritual clock always struck noon.

But Dives came to dislike these camp-meetings; they involved the demoralisation of farm service for the week. And religious people remarked another kind of demoralisation among the

whites ; there was a large flow of whiskey on the outskirts, a good deal of horse-trading, and the increase of piety was said to be purchased by an increase of immorality. I have my doubts about this, and on the whole have rather regretted the gradual extinction of the happy festival.

It has always remained with me a pleasant reflection that the simple-hearted negroes escaped the dogmatic discords of our religion. As we were remote from all heresies, Catholic or Protestant, the only burning issues were—Sprinkling *versus* Immersion, and Free Will *versus* Predestination. The Baptists were predestinarian, the Methodists represented Free Will, but the negroes were both Baptist and Methodist ; they clung to immersion and clung to the Methodist hymns and ecstasy. Thus did each coloured brother and sister easily reconcile the irreconcilable.

The immersion of the coloured people was always a picturesque and affecting scene. Dressed in white cotton—fabric of which their chain was made—they moved under the Sunday morning sunshine across the sands opposite our house to the river, and there sang gently and sweetly. There was no noise or shouting. The rite was performed by a white minister. After immersion each was embraced by his or her relatives. There was more singing, and the procession moved slowly away. White converts were immersed separately from the negroes, but they were few, and the performance was by no means so impressive.

No cruelty to negroes occurred in the houses or on the farms of any families in which we were intimate. Servants were sometimes flogged, but with no more severity and with less frequency than white children. A certain man who dishonoured the name of a reputable family by lashing his slave so severely that he soon after died, so shocked the county that the tradition of that manslaughter remains to this day. I remember well my father's efforts to bring the manslayer to justice—unavailing because only slaves witnessed the tragedy. Fury rarely overbore the slaveowner's need to keep his property in good condition. The only instance of brutality that I personally witnessed was at Stafford Court House, where a coarse man had charged four female slaves with an attempt to poison him. There was no real evidence, and some believed that it was an effort to obtain

for the elderly and unmarketable women the payment the county must make if they were executed. When the women were acquitted their owner took them out to his cart, bound them by their wrists to the back of it, ordered the driver to go on, tore down the dresses from their backs, and lashed them with a raw-hide until the cart disappeared on the road. A crowd witnessed this scene, and though there were mutterings none could interfere. The horror made an ineffaceable impression on me, though I was too young to generalise on it.

Deeply engraved also on my memory is a small, prison-like building in the centre of Falmouth, known as "Captain Pickett's," where negroes were sent to be flogged. The captain was the town constable, and one of his functions was to whip negroes when their owners so ordered. Although warned by my parents against loitering about "Captain Pickett's," this whetted my curiosity, and with other boys I heard the imploring tones of the sufferers. I remember the captain silently walking up and down in front of his grim house, with his iron-grey hair and beard, never smiling, never uttering a word from his compressed lips. When I had left Falmouth, and thought of him as the local figure-head of an evil system, I heard of his suicide.

It was many years before I could do the poor captain justice. As a matter of fact, the old constable was simply presiding at the last relic of the whipping post. The long dilapidated stocks were still visible near the churchyard, where they had stood at the door of Cedar Church. The whipping-post had hid itself in the constable's office. But I now have reason to believe that in that lonely den many a stripe fell gently, and that Captain Pickett hung himself simply because the shame of being an official negro-whipper became intolerable. The whipping-post ended with Captain Pickett. The last tidings I had of his building was that it was used as a storehouse of Federal bombs.\*

Although the slavedealers gathered their harvests in our

\* A man belonging to a wealthy citizen (Murray Forbes) had to be flogged on some complaint of a neighbour. Mr. Forbes intimated to Captain Pickett his hope that he would be merciful. Pickett said, "Mr. Forbes, there is not a more tender-hearted man in Falmouth than I am." The negro told his master, "Captain Pickett told me to 'holler,' and I hollered, but the cowhide fell on the post."

region, it was in large part surreptitiously. It was socially disreputable for a man to sell slaves to them, or indeed to part the members of families on his estate further than by hiring them to neighbours. Hiring-day in Falmouth was not often marked by unhappy scenes, as the increase of slaves in every homestead made it more comfortable for many of them to find new homes. The troubles arose when the death of some gentleman in debt necessitated the sale of his property.

The word "slave" was not used. We spoke of "free negroes" and "servants." Those were the happy days of inconsistency. Our Fourth-of-July orators talked grandly of the enormity of taxation without representation," and the right of every man to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"; but the bondage of millions of dusky human beings was never thought of as a thing even to be explained in those days. For myself I did not know our servants were slaves, and daresay I repeated in the kitchen my favourite school declamation ending "Give me Liberty or give me Death!" Also, I have a vague remembrance of envying the little blacks their greater freedom; most of them had nothing to do but roam and play.

My brother Peyton and I were on affectionate terms with the servants. They helped us in all our little projects, such as raising poultry and pigeons. Considerable patches of ground were given us on the Inglewood farm, where we competed as to which could raise the finest melons. We had varieties of water-melons and "musk-melons," which we sold at high prices to our father, and at table showed our high appreciation of their excellence. The only particular pet I ever had was an ugly duckling; it was wounded by a rat and had to be killed, and I was so heartbroken that I never ventured to have another animal pet. My affections were lavished on my little sister Mildred, five years younger than myself, and our tender relation to each other remains unbroken by the eventualities of life.

I won some distinction among Falmouth boys for skill in making willow whistles and playing on them, and for plumping marbles. I also had several other fair accomplishments, especially in making tiny mill-wheels in imitation of that which turned my father's cotton-factory. But I was not popular

a poor creature beside my handsome and dashing brother Peyton, always ready to wrestle or fight—things I hated. I worshipped rather precociously the beautiful ladies of Falmouth, and numerous aunts and cousins from the country, of whom some were always visiting us. I did their errands and attended on them with eagerness, and they were so gracious to me that I cared little for the boys. Moreover, I was beginning to form friendships with people met in story-books. Much as I disliked playground squabbles, I found it pleasant to assist at the slaughter of dragons. It was an era in my childish life when I journeyed with Christian to the Celestial City, past Apollyon and other foes not yet belonging to Fairyland. By fairy tales in "The Child's Own Book," by the "Arabian Nights," by "The Pilgrim's Progress," dreams were built on the stuff of me; I was surrounded with a sleep—a source of dreams—and my little life was rounded out thereby.

If I could have found the Bible, as I did the "Arabian Nights," among the old volumes, mainly medical, shelved in our bedroom (they had belonged to grandfather Daniel's library), as an unknown book, perhaps I should have found equal delight in it. But the sanctity attached to it, the duty of getting it by heart, the daily impressed belief that it concerned my salvation, made it a sealed book. Joseph and his Brethren, Moses in the Bulrushes, Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, were all pale beside Aladdin, Ali Baba, and the rest, amid whom fancy could roam with free wing.

The Bible was associated with blue and red tickets convertible into other religious books. At Sunday school a certain number of Scripture verses recited from memory were rewarded with a blue ticket; a certain number of blue tickets secured a red one; a certain number of the red—if I recall the colours correctly—enabled the holder to acquire any volume he might select from prize shelves prettily supplied by the Methodist Book Concern. I began with Genesis and memorised straight on, omitting nothing except perhaps long genealogies, and this was continued for years. I do not remember having been prevented by any teacher from reciting the obscene passages, and I was too Arcadian to discover anything indecent in the Bible. The Hindus say, "He that has no wound may touch poison."

There was a little book in our house entitled "Keeper in Search of his Master"—the story of a lost dog's suffering from hunger and maltreatment—over which I shed burning tears. From it I gained some sense of the feelings of animals, and from the tales of Maria Edgeworth I learned more about the value of kindness and generosity than I got from the Bible.

I think the first thing that impressed me in the Bible was the snake in Eden. My horror of snakes was indiscriminate; the first duty of man on seeing that crawling devil was to kill it. Dr. Adam Clarke in his Commentary, a favourite book with my father, suggested that before its sentence to crawl the serpent was a kind of ape. My father told the anecdote of a preacher, who cried, "If you don't repent, Dr. Clarke's ape will catch you!" He was amused, but I was shocked by the theory and the laughter. Levity was out of place in such a grave matter.

Travelling circuses sometimes visited Fredericksburg, and once—once only—I was permitted to go. What was my horror on seeing a young woman handle a huge serpent affectionately! Here were Eve and the Devil. I knew what was meant by my father's dislike of "sinful amusements"; my conscience took his side, and I never petitioned to go to another circus.

Another time my father startled me. He was conversing with some preacher and said, "I do not think Solomon's Song ought to be in the Bible at all." What my feeling was I cannot of course, remember, but the incident stands in my memory after sixty years.

Cousin Elizabeth Daniel, daughter of United States Justice Daniel, sometimes came to us from Richmond for a visit. She was distinguished for her intelligence and culture. No doubt she remarked the interest with which I listened to her conversations with my mother, which were chiefly on authors—Dickens, Scott, Byron, Southey, Moore, and others—and took notice of me. When I was about ten this cousin, after one of her visits, requested me to write to her. So began a correspondence which continued several years. I developed some thoughts by the effort to express them, and exactness of statement by the extreme pains I took in writing to the accomplished lady who

honoured me with her attention. Above all, some faith in my homely and shy self was engendered in me by her extended letters. These were not condescending nor patronising, but written as to a friend. Being herself an Episcopalian, she never wrote on doctrinal topics, but generally about books.

Probably I was just a little secularised by this interchange of thoughts unconnected with religion. Also I found the Methodist régime sufficiently elastic to admit not only the luxuries of our table, but beautiful moonlit evenings on the Rappahannock. The ladies carried their guitars, the gentlemen their flutes. There, silently crouched beside some affectionate aunt or cousin, I learned Moore's melodies by heart, and old Scotch songs—never to be thought of thenceforth as mere poetry, but as my heart's honeydew. Late in life, in printing something about Virginia I spoke of "the crystal Rappahannock." I learned that some aged people there regarded the river as normally muddy, and that indeed might be expected of a stream coming from the mountains, and at Falmouth dashing over falls. All I can say is that in early boyhood I used to see sweet faces and pure skies in its waters, and feel certain that it was then the crystal Rappahannock.

The great and sensational events of our early boyhood (brother Peyton and myself) were two visits to Richmond. What splendour! On the first visit we stayed at the house of Justice Daniel, who was at home, and he and his wife (she was a daughter of Edmund Randolph, first attorney-general of the United States) and their daughters Elizabeth and Anne, and their brother Peter, were gracious and charming to us. Our cousin John Moncure Daniel, then studying law in Richmond, took us about to show us the capital and other notable things. Richmond was thenceforth the city called Beautiful, and it remained so after a subsequent visit to our young cousins in the home of uncle Travers and aunt Susan Daniel. There was a *soupsçon* of worldliness there too, refreshing to our little Methodist souls, for they taught us a card game ("seven-up"). We had never seen a pack of cards before, and it was many a year before I saw another.

Public amusements were unknown to Falmouth. Once when a band of "Buy-a-broom" girls in picturesque costumes went from door to door with their little white brooms, it was as ex-

citing as an opera. I can see them now with their strange faces, their graceful gestures, and hear their song :—

Buy a bro-o-m, buy a bro-o-m !  
Buy a bro-o-m, buy a bro-o-m !  
O buy of the wandering Bavarian  
A Broom !

They carried off our pocket-money, and left a lot of worthless sticks terminating with shavings, but also left a melody that I can sing to-day. Once we had in Fredericksburg astronomic lectures with magic lantern from Dr. Lardner. Another course was from Dr. Goadby of London on zoölogy ; in one of these he made a statement about rats that I never forgot. He said the rat had humanlike tastes ; if two jars of preserves—one sweetened with loaf sugar, the other with brown—were left near rats, they would consume the loaf sugar preserves before touching the brown sugar jar. My idea of the rat was revolutionised. I should not myself be so particular.

Now and then a famous singer stopped for one or two evenings and sang in Fredericksburg Town Hall. Henry Bishop was long remembered, and I almost shudder now in recalling his dramatic rendering of "The Maniac," and one or two other thrilling compositions of his.

The Tournament was still an institution in our neighbourhood. It took place annually in a long lane on the Spottsylvania side of the river. The young men from various counties, mounted on their decorated steeds, tilted at the suspended ring, and the victor received his wreath, kneeling, from the Queen of Love and Beauty, surrounded by her maids of honour on a splendid platform. These were the beautiful and refined ladies of northern Virginia. It was an important social event, and the chief relic of the ancient fair and horse-race for which our region was once famous, but on which the kill-joy preachers had frowned. The puritanical spirit steadily blighting the gaieties of old Virginia did not long spare the Tournament and the annual ball.

## CHAPTER IV.

Fredericksburg Academy—Charles Dickens in Virginia—The Law Courts—  
Judge Moncure—Falmouth Church—John Minor—The Methodist  
Conventicle—St. George's—First Religious Emotions.

IN my tenth year I was sent to the "Fredericksburg Classical and Mathematical Academy," the principal educational institution in northern Virginia. The academy grew out of the school founded by the admirable clergyman of French descent, James Marye, to which George Washington went just a hundred years before. Our principal, Thomas Hanson, taught Greek and Latin in the central building, other studies being in the wings under two assistants. The "scholars" were of many counties, and most of the historic families of Virginia were represented, though probably few of the youths knew or cared about their ancestors. I believe I was the youngest pupil, the ages ranging mostly between twelve and seventeen. The academy was under the auspices of St. George's Church, whose venerable rector, Dr. Edward C. McGuire, occasionally visited us.

The Falmouth contingent was large, and there was some "chaffing" between them and the Fredericksburg scholars. These called our village "Hogtown," alleging that hogs were seen in the streets, and we retorted with "Sheeptown," with what connotation I cannot remember. But this exchange of epithets caused no fights, albeit among us (about 200) there was a normal proportion of bullies, and fisticuffs were not uncommon in the acre lot behind the school. Our recess games were chiefly chermamy and bandy ("hockey"). An accidental blow from a bandystick on my right eye laid me up in darkness, with leeches. Though there was no visible sequel at the time, the eye became dim in after years, and finally became near-sighted.

Most of us were preparing for some college, and the keys to every college were Latin and Greek. To these our time was

mainly given, our readings being in "Græca Majora," and in school editions of Latin classics. I liked these studies, but hated mathematics. I found delight in "The Scholar's Companion," from which we learned the Greek and Latin origin of many English words. My distinction was in penmanship; it was agreed that no rival could equal my pen-printing of German and other ornamental lettering. Once grandfather Conway asked me to show him some of my penmanship. I prepared with pains imitations of the signatures of himself, of my father, and uncles. "Wonderful indeed," he said; then patting me on the head, he added with a smile, "Yes, it is perfect, and I hope you'll never do it again!" I wondered, but his word was law, and my facsimiles ended.

Mr. Hanson—"Old Tommy"—was an excellent teacher. He kept a switch beside him, but rarely used it, and his assistants were not permitted to inflict corporal punishment. He often made occasion to stimulate our sense of honour and instruct us in conduct and kindness. There was no religious teaching beyond the daily opening with Scripture and a scarce-audible prayer. Equality prevailed among us. No one had any advantage in belonging to any wealthy or historic family. The ancestral cult which arose with the national centenaries was unknown. Never did I heard George Washington or any other American celebrity held up as an exemplar. And this was the case not only in our school, but in the community; with the exception that Mary, the mother of Washington, was held up as a model of piety, and a place pointed out near her monument where she was said to have retired for prayer.

I got high marks in Latin and Greek, but had no enjoyment in the books read. Later I found among the old books of grandfather Daniel English translations of Virgil's "Æneid" and Ovid's "Metamorphoses," and read them with delight, though I had gone through both in the original without much interest save in the mark I was to get. Mr. Hanson, who had enthusiasm for classical literature, fancied, I think, that he had in me a ten-year-old appreciator of the same. Sometimes on returning to the school after recess he might have observed me at my desk and supposed that the playground was left for the charms of Cæsar or Horace. But it was for pastimes with "Oliver Twist"

"Little Nell," or other creations of my Prospero, whose masque filled our prosaic streets.

Charles Dickens came like one of our Rappahannock freshets, which once or twice rose high enough to float logs in our wood-cellar. Methodist prejudices against novel-reading were in this case floated, and I remember my parents laughing and weeping over the books of "Boz" while I was only old enough to build infant romances out of Cruikshank's illustrations. Dickens supplied our homes with new fables, phrases, types. Our neighbour Douglas Gordon broke a small blood-vessel laughing over Pickwick, and we pitied him not for the lesion, but because his doctor forbade him to read Dickens. My baby brother Richard acquired by his infant excitability the sobriquet "Tim Linkinwater."

In 1842 news came that Charles Dickens had arrived in America, and presently it was announced that on a certain day he was to pass through Fredericksburg on his way to Richmond.

He was to come by steamboat from Washington to Aquia landing, thence by stage to Fredericksburg, alighting only for lunch at Farmer's Hotel. The prospect of setting eyes on the greatest man in the world filled me with such emotion that my parents agreed that I might in their name ask Mr. Hanson for the necessary permission to leave school a little before the midday recess. The usage when we wished to leave the schoolroom temporarily was to stand silently before the master. This I did, but he happened to be irritated by someone in the class he was hearing, and motioned me off. On my endeavouring to say I had permission of my parents he ordered me to my seat. Thither I returned, jumped out of an open window, seven or eight feet from the ground, and reached the inn just as the author was alighting. On my return to school just after recess, there was a dead silence; my leap had been observed by many, and none knew the reason for it. Mr. Hanson stood pale and agitated, for I had been hitherto obedient. My brother Peyton was absent, and I was too much dazed by the situation to arrest by any plea the impending switch. It was the only flogging I ever received in school, and feeling that it was unmerited I bore it without a word or a tear.

*But tout compréhensif, c'est tout pardonner.* The dear old

master when he learned the whole story was more troubled than I was, for I had got a good look at Dickens. During my remaining five years in the school he treated me with a sort of affection, and when I left and entered college in my sixteenth year he announced the fact in school, and uttered a eulogy on my conduct and diligence.

My most lasting education in all those years was in the law courts, and in listening to discussions of cases in our house. My opportunities were of the best. Two of my father's brothers were prominent lawyers, John Moncure and Eustace, and the latter became an eminent judge. My grandfather Conway, clerk of the county, had been educated for the bar. His eldest daughter married Richard Moncure, afterwards the Chief Justice of Virginia. On my mother's side, her uncle Peter Daniel was a justice of the United States Supreme Court, and her brother Travers Daniel, long attorney-general of Virginia, had a wide reputation for learning and eloquence. My father's position as presiding magistrate of the county brought many lawyers to our house for consultation. When some great case was to be argued in Fredericksburg, especially when one of my uncles was to speak, I was permitted to go to the courthouse at cost of a brief absence from school. My vacations were mostly passed at "Erleslie," and in the court-house I found my theatre, and witnessed many a comedy and tragedy. I can still hear the ringing laughter attending the efforts of lawyers to trip each other, or the witnesses. Face after face of the prisoners rise before me. Opposite the court-house was the gaol, a whited sepulchre to my eyes, from whose small grated apertures looked murderous phantoms. I see them brought out, handcuffed, and follow them to the court-room, and feel the awe of a fellow-man dragged prematurely before the bar of God, where the balances are produced, and all the deeds of his life cast into their scale. It was of course the murder cases that made the deepest impression. The juries consisted of men whom I was accustomed to see in their commonplace work, but after I had seen them in court with faces intent for hours in trying to get at the fact and the truth, these neighbours were never common again.

In murder cases it was necessary that uncle Richard Moncure, the prosecuting attorney, should be confronted with a powerful

advocate, and when one had to be appointed by the court the defence was often entrusted to the elder John L. Marye of Fredericksburg. He was in appearance as French as his great-grandfather James Marye, who came from Europe to preach to the Huguenots in Virginia and founded St. George's Church in Fredericksburg and the first school there. From Marye's interestingly homely countenance there was unsheathed in pleading a spirit which often filled me with wonder. When he appeared in the Stafford court-room everybody knew that some prisoner's case was hard to defend. It was said that before entering on his final speech in defence, Marye slipped over to the inn and drank two cups of a tear-producing tea. The pathos and the tears invariably came.

I remember a speech by Marye in which a question of interpreting a person's compromising utterance was raised. The advocate warned the jury against taking words at foot of the letter, and claimed that the prosecutor (uncle Richard), good churchman as he was, would not venture to take literally the words of Jesus, If a man smite thee on one cheek turn to him the other. "And," he added, "if a thief were to steal my honoured friend's cloak, would he give the rogue his coat also?" Uncle Richard made no special reply to these words, and they sank deep into my mind.

While at the bar uncle Richard steadily refused to advocate any case, whatever the fee offered, in which he detected any injustice. This was so well known that when he did undertake any case it was generally equivalent to a judicial decision. The lawyers were said to be much relieved when he was transferred to the bench.

Again and again, as prosecuting attorney, did he take some criminal, unable to procure competent counsel, under his protection, and see that in the face of public prejudice justice did not swerve. I remember vividly a scene of this kind. A very brutal rogue, notorious for his violence, had killed a man, and there was general satisfaction that the county was now to get rid of him by the gallows. He was a criminal of very repulsive appearance, and his defiant glare around the court-room excited horror and wrath. The crowd already saw the noose round his bull-like neck. Uncle Richard arose and calmly said, "May it

please your Honour, I mean to prosecute this man for murder—in the second degree.” Murmurs of surprise and anger were heard. During this manifestation the prosecutor said not a word, but seemed to be absorbed in arranging his papers. When he began his speech it was with sublime sentences concerning justice. Then he proceeded to show that it was a case of homicide which, albeit guilty, was committed without any deadly weapon, and that there was no evidence of deliberation.

In my novel “Pine and Palm” I have disguised in “Judge Stirling” traits of this beloved uncle, whose greatness of mind and character raised above me a standard to which I have always paid homage. There was such intimacy between him and my father and their families, that this uncle’s house, Glencairn, was another home to me. No word of unkindness, thoughtlessness, or of depreciation, ever came from him. Affectionate, simple, full of sympathy and humour, we could always approach him; and occasionally, when on his way to his office, in a separate building, he would pause a few moments to join in our outdoor sport.

There was a wide impression in the county that Chief Justice Moncure was a child outside his profession; and among the illustrations of this it was told that on seeing his negroes removing a cider-press, he undertook to help them by supporting a cross-beam with his shoulder, in order that it might not be broken by a fall. In this effort he struggled until his face was red, and at last cried, “I can support it no longer—it must fall—get out of the way!” His shoulder was withdrawn, but the beam remained fixed in the air, and it took the workmen some time to get it down.

On one occasion a deputation of jurists journeyed from Richmond to Glencairn to consult him on some important matter, and found him in his front garden, green bag in hand, playing puss-in-the-corner with the children—among these being a little negro boy, who was just calling out, “Now run, Mars’ Dick!”

Among the many legends concerning the later life of this Chief Justice one tells that when he was very ill at Staunton, where the court was sitting, and felt his end near, he reminded his wife that their pecuniary circumstances had been much reduced since the war, and begged her not to carry his body to

Glencairn for burial. The State, he said, would defray the expenses of his burial wherever he died, and the cost of the removal of his body to Stafford would be heavy. His wife, overwhelmed with grief, said that she must refuse what might be his last request. In vain he entreated, and at length exclaimed, "Then I'll not die here at all!" And sure enough he arose and lived several years after. He died in 1882, and was buried in the family graveyard at Glencairn.

Uncle Richard perceived my fondness for reading, and sometimes took me to his office and sat me in a corner with a book. One afternoon I was absorbed in an old law book on Medical Jurisprudence, which contained examples of mental and moral delusion. Optical and other spectres were raised and laid, ghosts legally analysed, and the problems of responsibility dealt with in a lucid way which enabled me to take some steps in real thinking.

Sometimes uncle Richard talked to me about our academy, my favourite studies, my schoolmates, of whose parents or ancestors he related pleasant anecdotes. Of religion he never spoke to me. He was the most eminent layman of the Episcopal Church in northern Virginia, and represented St. George's parish in the great church conventions, but he rarely conversed about doctrines. He hated all intolerance. When someone spoke sharply of a clergyman's leaning toward "Mariolatry," uncle Richard said, "If we reverence Jesus we would naturally reverence his mother." When I first met him after becoming a Unitarian, he treated me with the wonted affection, and made no allusion to my change of faith.

One judicial action of Chief Justice Moncure is of historical interest in connection with slavery. Our neighbour, Mrs. Coalter, bequeathed freedom to her numerous slaves. But after the clause of liberation the will said that if her negroes preferred to remain in slavery they might select their masters. The husband of the heir contended that the clause giving the slaves this choice, not legal in Virginia, invalidated the liberating clause. The case reached the Court of Appeals, and a majority of the court sustained the heir's contention; the negroes—to whom Mrs. Coalter, as was proved, had long promised freedom—remained in slavery until liberated by the war. Chief Justice

Moncure vehemently pronounced the decision contrary both to law and equity. His minority opinion is now supported by every jurist in Virginia. The case was decided not long before the Secession, when the Southern people were infuriated, and to this feeling the injustice is generally ascribed. The outrageous wrong was reported in the Northern papers, and it is the more important that I should record here this protest of the Chief Justice.

The only church in Falmouth was (and is) a "Union" house. Catholics and Unitarians were unknown in our region, and I remember no Episcopalian service in Falmouth; but between Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians, the village had two and sometimes three sermons every Sunday. Now and then some peripatetic propagandist appeared. I remember the impression made on me by a female preacher, the only one I ever heard in Virginia. A good-looking man sat beside her in the pulpit, but uttered no word; the lady—middle-aged, refined, comely—arose without hymn or prayer, laid aside her grey poke-bonnet, and gave her sermon, of which I remember the sweet voice and engaging simplicity. I also remember that a hypercritical uncle, Dr. J. H. Daniel, praised the sermon.

The walls in the vestibule of Falmouth church were thickly covered with caricatures of various preachers and leading citizens pencilled by irreverent youths while waiting to escort the ladies home. Probably the contrarious dogmas set forth from a "Union" pulpit may have had a tendency to keep clever youths from taking any of them seriously. Among our elders there was a keen interest in the controversies which I think must have usually characterised the sermons, for I do not recall one that contained anything for a child. The discussions in our house about "Calvinism" piqued my curiosity. My parents were once much amused by a narrative given them by learned John Minor, on one of his calls, of which I managed to get in after-years an exact version. A Presbyterian preacher visited him (John Minor) to remonstrate against his abstention from church, alleging the unhappy influence of his indifference to religion.

"But how am I to acquire interest in religion?" said I.

"Through the influence of the Holy Ghost," said he.

"How am I to obtain that influence?"

"By prayer."

"What! can my lips move the Holy Ghost?"

"The Holy Ghost moves you to pray."

"It appears that I cannot get religion till I pray for it, and I cannot pray for it till I've got it."

The congregations in Falmouth included the élite, but it was different in the Methodist conventicle in Fredericksburg. I do not suppose that anyone attending the present neat Methodist church there remembers the room where their predecessors assembled. It was a low-roofed shanty built of planks by John Cobler. "Father Cobler" had been a carpenter and a local preacher to the town in 1789; but having married a widow possessing slaves it was decided that he must not preach. He manumitted the slaves, but did not resume preaching. I remember his benign look, serene face, and bald head. I recall but one preacher—a square-jawed man with grating voice. With the exception of our family and uncle Eustace Conway and John Cobler, the attendants were mostly poor and ignorant. The women generally wore drab gowns and Quakerised bonnets. There was no choir, and no organ; the hymns, led by a good man with a cracked voice and a tuning-fork, were crooned in unison.

It was pleasant to drive over in our big round coach and back. But I saw my cousins and playmates on their way to the fine churches, and in my tenth year going to the meeting-house began to be a half-conscious martyrdom. I have a vague remembrance of humiliation by some boys' jesting references to Methodists. Several times I had been taken by relatives to the Episcopal church, and it was a family joke that I declared myself an "organ Christian." I was painfully precocious, and old enough to be troubled by the contrast between our Methodist and our social environment. I was not happy in this double life. I envied my playmates their sparkling worldliness and their indifference about their souls. In fair weather I walked over to "meeting" and passed the doors of the two handsome churches—St. George's and the Presbyterian—to the poor quarter called Liberty Town, to kneel amid ugliness and dream of beauty.

However, towards the close of 1841, the Methodists completed their new church, and "Cobler's" was turned over to the negroes. But still there was no organ. Happily there was no Christmas service in the Methodist church, and on that day I went to St. George's. The ancient church, which had stood for a hundred years, and which the Washingtons and other historic families had attended, possessed an antique dignity not discoverable in the present edifice.

I remember vividly my first Christmas in St. George's (perhaps my eleventh year). How beautiful it all was! I sat in the cushioned pew with beloved relatives, near the rector's wife (granddaughter of Betty Lewis, Washington's sister), and surrounded by elegant people. The church was festooned with evergreen, which seemed to find voice in the "Gloria" with its soft and tender duet, "Thou that takest away the sins of the world." My heart was at peace, and I was prepared to listen to the gospel of peace as it came from the lips of the child-like old rector. Dr. McGuire, with his noble countenance, with charming simplicity—without heat or gesture—read a poetic discourse, picturing a world at peace, when a new star was kindled in the sky. Then from the choir broke forth the Christmas hymn, "While shepherds watched their flocks by night." That carol came to me as if from the very angels on the first Christmas day. Just above the red screen was visible the lovely face of the chief singer—whose tender voice carried the song into the depths of my heart.

Often had I read the story in the New Testament; I could repeat every word of it from memory; but then and there the glad tidings first reached me. I had never before seen the young singer who led the choir. I afterwards learned that her name was Ella Rothrock, and am told that she married and is living (1903) in Philadelphia. She is not likely ever to know that her voice first raised for a boy she never saw the star of a love for "all mankind."

Shepherds, angels, star, long ago turned to a fairy tale; the happy tears unsealed by glad tidings of joy for mankind have changed to tears of grief at tidings of war and woe for mankind; yet when past seventy I listen to the melodies that then moved me, above them all comes the voice of the singer of

St. George's church repeating with new meaning the burden of the carol:—

"Fear not," the angel cried (for dread  
Had seized their troubled mind),  
"Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
To you and all mankind."

To this song my heart responded in boyhood, my reason responds to-day. Religion, whose end and aim is not human happiness on earth, is a cruel superstition.

After this memorable Christmas experience I observed that the Methodist "meeting" ended sooner than at St. George's, and that by enterprise I could reach the gallery there and hear the last hymn. My parents were too wise to object to my device. I was indeed allowed now and then to attend the whole service, and was trained by that choir—above all, by Ella Rothrock's singing—to a passionate love of sacred music.

To our great delight my sister Mildred developed musical taste and a sweet voice. There was a good music teacher in Fredericksburg, and my father bought a fine piano. So fast as sister learned her notes I also learned enough to play hymn tunes. I got the St. George tune-book and found the tunes that charmed me—first of all the "Gloria in Excelsis," and "Nativity," then old "Hotham," "Olympia," "Bethlehem," "Mornington," "Dundee"—one that had delighted me being actually named "Conway." I learned to play them all. I set my mother, sister, aunts, to singing them, joining in myself with a fervent second.

## CHAPTER V.

Dickinson College—The Faculty in 1847—Professor McClintock and the Slave-hunters—Student Life—My "Conversion"—Northern and Southern Methodism.

I WAS sent to college too soon. My elder brother had gone to Dickinson College at Carlisle, and so desired to have me with him that I was taken from the academy. I had barely turned fifteen when I became a Sophomore, and four months later was advanced to the Junior class. I was the youngest in these classes.

The college Faculty was not surpassed in ability by any in America. One chair indeed was inadequately filled—that of mathematics. Its professor (Sudler) was learned, but had not the art of teaching. Although it was a Methodist college, best teachers had been secured without regard to doctrinal views, two of them, I believe, not being members of any church. One of these was William Allen, professor of chemistry, afterwards president of Girard College.\*

Spencer F. Baird, afterwards chief of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, was never a Methodist, and his wife was a Unitarian. He was a professor of zoölogy.

The classical department was represented by Dr. John M'Clintock and Dr. George R. Crooks, afterwards of Drew Seminary, who were Broad-church Methodists and original thinkers.

The professor of mental and moral philosophy, and of English composition and rhetoric, was Caldwell, who might have been a great man had he not died early.

At the head of these brilliant men was Robert Emory, who

\* While president of Girard College Allen married a Unitarian lady of Boston. This was after I had become a Unitarian minister, and before the marriage I was consulted by the lady's pastor concerning my old professor's character! Happily I was able to give the man of whom I once stood in awe a good recommendation, and especially felt sure that he had not enough orthodoxy to trouble a Unitarian wife.

to every student was an ideal college president. In personal presence, in his manners, at once gracious and dignified, in his simplicity, and the sweetness of his voice, he had every quality that could excite young enthusiasm. Robert Emory's biography of his father, Bishop Emory, is a scholarly work, but it can convey no idea of the engaging personality of our president. When he called on my brother and myself, I cannot remember what he said, but after he left we were ready to die for him.

Professor Caldwell used to impress on us the importance of weighed words, exact statement, and tones sympathetic with the sense. His criticism of our compositions, or of our accentuation in reading, was uttered with such sweetness that the effect was always encouragement. We last met Professor Caldwell on February 28th, 1848. He told us there would be "no more Monday morning recitations, as he was going away." Soon after we heard of his death. So ended the work to which many congregations have been indebted that never heard his name.

It was fortunate for us that there was in the Faculty a man of such versatility as Allen, who in addition to his own chair (chemistry and physics) undertook the principal part of the subjects Caldwell had to give up. Memorable were Allen's instructions in rhetoric and logic. The text-book was Whately's, but Allen was an abler man than Whately, and often took us on excursions away from the books. His fundamental principle was that the object of all eloquence is to carry one's point. The finest writing or speaking that doesn't help to carry one's point is no eloquence at all, but the reverse of it, distracting attention from the one purpose. I remember also an admirable talk he gave us on imaginative literature, especially fiction. He knew the kind of fiction that told the truth: "and, gentlemen, whatever people may say against novels, such a work is always worth reading."

We called Professor Allen vulgarly "Bully Allen," classically "Corpus," on account of his rotund dimensions, and his large ruddy countenance, suggestive of the typical John Bull. His faults as a professor were that he occasionally experimented on students, and did not always keep his temper. In a recitation on rhetoric he once asked me a question about "debating societies"; though it was apparently from the Whately open before

him, I had found there nothing on the subject, and shook my head. He then propounded the question to another of the class, who answered fluently. Allen then drily said, "The subject is not alluded to in the edition used by the class," and the poor student's erroneous reply revealed that he had not studied the lesson assigned. Allen tried a galvanic trick on one of our class (Auchmuty), inviting him to take hold of the handles of a battery. The shock caused Auchmuty to yell and jerk, the battery being smashed, causing fun to the class and visible anger in the professor. I wrote a description of this scene in magniloquent Homeric measure, which amused some fellow-students, and I suspect was heard of by Allen, who seemed cross with me for a week.

Baird, the youngest of the Faculty, was the beloved professor and the ideal student. He was beautiful and also manly; all that was finest in the forms he explained to us seemed to be represented in the man. He possessed the art of getting knowledge into the dullest pupil. So fine was his spirit that his explanations of all the organs and functions of the various species were an instruction also in refinement of mind. Nothing unclean could approach him. One main charm of spring's approach was that then would begin our weekly rambles in field, meadow, wood, where Baird introduced us to his intimates. About some of these—especially snakes—most of us had indiscriminate superstitions. Occasionally he would capture some pretty and harmless snakes, and show us with pencillings their difference from the poisonous ones. He even persuaded the bolder among us to handle them. He kept a small barrel of these pretty reptiles in his house, and his little daughter used to play with them, till once some lady entering the room gave a scream. After that, so ran the story, the child had the usual horror of snakes.

After Professor Baird went to reside in Washington I had opportunities of seeing him and his family often. Mrs. Baird was a lady of fine culture and much wit. Baird was very lovable in his home, and to the end of life he remained a man in whom I never discovered a fault of mind or heart. He awakened in me a love of science, to which I had previously given little thought.

Dr. M'Clintock made Greek studies interesting, and Professor

Crooks had much skill in teaching Latin. We studied in Manuals compiled by them jointly, and it used to be said that to enter the kingdom of heaven one must study his Bible carefully and his "M'Clintock and Crooks" prayerfully.

Among the assistant teachers was Otis Henry Tiffany, afterwards widely known as an attractive pulpit speaker in Baltimore and New York. Another, Devinney, had a reserved manner, and the students thought him "icy"; but his young wife died, and Devinney sank into melancholy and did not long survive her. It was rumoured that he took his own life.

Professor M'Clintock was a much occupied man. His scholarship and literary accomplishments brought his pen into much demand for the *Methodist Quarterly*, of which he became editor later, and other publications. He kept abreast of theological and philosophical inquiries in Europe and America. We were all proud of his reputation and careful not to encroach on his time. He was the last man one might expect to see mixed up in any disturbance, and there was wild excitement when on a bright June afternoon (1847) rumours spread of a fatal riot led by this same professor!

One Kennedy of Maryland had discovered his three fugitive slaves in Carlisle, and in an attempt to rescue them when led out of the court-room he was mortally wounded. My friend Emory M'Clintock, F.R.S., son of the professor, possesses the documents in this once famous case. On June 2nd, Professor M'Clintock, casually passing the court-house, was told of the trial of the fugitives, and entered. Finding by speaking to the judge that he (the judge) was not acquainted with a law just passed, M'Clintock went home and brought a copy of it. On his way out of the court-room he saw a white man raise his stick over the head of a negro, to whom he said, "If you are struck, apply to me, and I will see justice done you." When M'Clintock returned with the new law, the case was already decided, and the fugitives were being led out to a carriage. Then occurred the riot. M'Clintock kept entirely out of it, and started homewards, stopping a moment to ask the doctor if Kennedy was badly hurt, and to express regret, and another moment to protect a woman. "Near the court-house corner," he states, "I saw two men holding and apparently abusing an old negro woman. I asked her if

they had authority. The woman jumped towards me and threw her left arm round me. I released myself, and then told the officer that if he arrested the woman wrongfully, he did it on his own responsibility, and I should see justice done to her. The woman said that she had done nothing, but only attempted to get her old man out of the *melée*, for fear he should be hurt. The officer said he saw her strike. I then asked, 'Did you see her strike?' He said hesitatingly, 'At least I saw her raise her hand to her head,' and then I think he let her go. In a short time after I returned home."

There was probably not an abolitionist amongst the students, and most of us perhaps were from slave States. My brother and I, like others, packed our trunks to leave college. A meeting of all the students was held in the evening—in the college chapel—at which President Emory spoke a few reassuring words; but we Southerners, wildly excited, appointed a meeting for next morning. At this meeting (June 3) we were all stormy until the door opened and the face of M'Clintock was seen, serene as if about to take his usual seat in his recitation-room. There was a sudden hush. Without excitement or gesture, without any accent of apology or of appeal, he related the simple facts, then descended from the pulpit and moved quickly along the aisle and out of the door.

When M'Clintock had disappeared there were consultations between those sitting side by side, and two or three Seniors drew up resolutions of entire confidence in the professor, which were signed by everyone present (ninety), and sent to leading papers for publication.

Being then little over fifteen, I could not appreciate all the reasons why thenceforth M'Clintock was to me the most interesting figure in Carlisle. The calm, moral force of that address in the chapel, the perfect repose of the man resting on simple truth, I appreciated; to this day whenever I think of him there arises that scene in the chapel. It was to be some years yet before I could recognise the picturesqueness of the scene, and see shining above his head the testimony in court of his enemy, Edward Hutt; "M'Clintock was the only white man by the negroes." One white gentleman at least in the Carlisle of 1847 was capable of concern about the negroes! It would not have

been easy at that date to find a professor in any American college willing to shield negro slaves.

It was fortunate that the celebrated trial of Dr. M'Clintock took place during vacation. When we returned after summer it was to find our professor triumphant over a conspiracy of politicians—all pro-slavery—to get him into prison or drive him out of town. Witness after witness, perjurer after perjurer, came forward to testify that M'Clintock was with those who struck down Kennedy, had said to the fallen man that he was served right, etc. Those acquainted with M'Clintock knew this testimony to be false, but how could it be disproved? A well-known citizen, Jacob Rheem, testified that he was told by a man that he had overheard two men say they were resolved to drive M'Clintock out of Carlisle. The overheard conversation indicated a conspiracy, but Rheem could not remember the name or locality of his informant. M'Clintock's lawyer, Hon. William Meredith, tried in vain to get some clue, but when all seemed hopeless, Rheem sprang forward and pointed to a man just entering the court-room, and cried, "There's the man!" The stranger, called to the stand, fully corroborated Rheem. This new witness lived miles out of Carlisle, and his entrance at that moment, without knowing that his testimony was wanted, extended that testimony to Providence also.

The countryman's exposure of the conspiracy against M'Clintock greatly impressed the students and the community, but was not needed to clear him. Several lawyers not anti-slavery testified that at the time when he was alleged to be in the riot he was some distance off talking with themselves. The trial only bequeathed a heavy case against slavery. It was the doom of that institution that every step it took outside its habitat left a track of blood. One slaveholder seizing negroes seeking liberty outweighed the benevolence of ten thousand kind masters whose servants clung fondly to them.

We had a college "infidel"—a Junior named Willard. I do not remember any spirit of propagandism about him, but he was regarded as a curiosity, and students sometimes grouped themselves around him and plied him with questions. I was several times a silent listener, but cannot recall any of the questions or answers. I remember the grave look and calm voice

of Willard, and also a certain wondering respect manifested by the questioners and listeners. I was as yet without any inner ear to appreciate such discussions. But I find in a little skit of mine ("Dura Studentis," autumn of 1847) read in the *Bouquet* (a college periodical read in the chapel but not printed) sentences which probably referred to him: "The Mahometan system of forcing into the mortal corpuses of bored students the principles of natural and revealed religion—virtue and all—is got in vogue. Though he (the Junior) be an infidel here he is forced to give utterance to the clearest and most conclusive arguments in favour of Christianity, and—though unwilling—is forced to become either a convert or a hypocrite."

When those words were written I was a new Junior and not consciously sceptical. I can account for the sentences only by supposing that some incident had occurred in connection with Willard's recitations in Paley's "Evidences" and Butler's "Analogy." I would naturally have been attracted by his independence. A few months later I was myself a "convert."

The aim of our professors was not to make us preachers, but to make us leaders of men, whatever our avocation. We were trained to write and speak with care, and to avoid anything like the heat and rant which so easily beset the preacher.

The sermon that made the deepest impression on me at college was one by Professor Crooks on Charity; his text was the whole of 1 Cor. xiii., after reading which he exclaimed, "What a coronet of brilliants around the brow of Charity." He then proceeded to explain that the word translated charity is *αγάπη*, love, and proceeded to give Love a beautiful coronet of his own. Whether then, or before, or afterward, a great love for Crooks sprang in my breast. I presently had him for my "patron," and I never knew a better man. Our friendship continued through life, and his death bereaved me of one from whose affection no doctrinal differences could ever alienate me.

There were too many spre'es among the students, but I remember none supposed to be habitual tipplers. There were advantages on the side of sobriety and gentlemanly conduct—notably the prospect of reception at the *soirées* of Miss Payne's Seminary for young ladies—they were, of course, all beautiful—and perhaps even of sharing their occasional rambles. And

indeed the society of Carlisle generally was very attractive and accessible to gentlemanly students.

The few sports we had were such as would be regarded as puerile in these days of college athletics. We even played hopscotch! The prizes of a college career in those days were not only scholastic, but also intellectual, and many types of individual mind and character were developed. These were chiefly displayed at the Saturday declamation, when the chapel was crowded with ladies.

To me it was indeed a revelation to find so many great men and refined ladies belonging to a sect which in Fredericksburg was in dismal contrast with the Episcopalian and Presbyterian churches. To hear such learned and polite people talking about "conversion" led me to think seriously about it. I knew that my parents were anxious that I should be "converted," and that nothing could cause greater joy in our household than the tidings that I had "experienced religion." So I went to the "mourner's bench," under no fear or excitement, having determined on the step in my own room.

After my graduation (1849), I wrote some notes about Carlisle, among them the following :—

About the first of the year (1848) they were holding prayer-meetings down at Mr. Nadal's church, and after a few nights had one mourner. As soon as I heard that there was some prospect of a revival, I got my lessons well early in the afternoon and went down there with the full determination to go up to the altar to be prayed for. As soon as the invitation was given I went forward. My going up shocked a great many people, and soon that night there were many other students, among them my brother Peyton. I myself had very little feeling or conviction of anything. But I was *resolved* never to stop from that moment until I enjoyed religion in my heart, if there was such enjoyment to be had. My feelings were roused full soon enough, and I had little cause to complain of apathy. In my own room in the afternoon of the ninth day of January I first felt peaceful; and professed religion two Sundays after by joining the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The immediate fruits were that I took a class in the Sunday school, sang in the choir, and became active in the college temperance society. Then my health broke down, and my sixteenth

birthday found me in bed with chill and fever. My father came on and took me home. On our way he was visited in Baltimore by Rev. Dr. Bond, famous as the leading writer in the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, the great organ of Methodism. Their talk was on church politics, which were then assuming a very serious character. Slavery had already divided the Methodist Church. The great Baltimore Conference extended through northern Virginia, and was making herculean efforts to maintain its hold there in the face of the rising pro-slavery agitation. Everything, as Bond well knew, depended on my father, and by that long conversation I learned the whole situation, and by what efforts he was holding the churches in our region loyal after the secession of the "Methodist Church South."

## CHAPTER VI.

Politics in Virginia—Rev. Norval Wilson—John Moncure Daniel, Editor of the *Examiner*—My First Appearance in Print.

ALTHOUGH after reaching home I recovered from illness, it was decided that I should not return to college until after summer vacation. Thus I had early in my seventeenth year five months in which to study things not taught in academy or college. Good opportunities came. My father's partner in the cotton-factory, Warren Slaughter, a very intelligent gentleman, invited me to go with him in his buggy on a tour through several counties—Fauquier, Culpeper, Loudoun. We visited villages and homesteads in all of which Mr. Slaughter had relatives or friends, and I made many pleasant acquaintances.

Another tour was with my uncle Eustace Conway (afterwards judge) in his buggy, to attend courts in Stafford, Prince William (Brentsville), and Fairfax. The presidential contest between Lewis Cass (Democrat) and General Zachary Taylor (Whig) was in full blast, and at Brentsville I heard speeches from several political orators of Virginia. After its morning session the court adjourned till next day; at two a bell was rung, and a crowd assembled in the grove, where arrangements had been made to give a hearing to Congressman Pendleton; but the Democrats would not let their opponents have it all their own way, and had secured the attendance of Hon. John S. Barbour, Sr., the most famous orator in Virginia. The debate was opened by two able Warrenton lawyers—Payne (Democrat), and Chilton (Whig). Chilton was the Virginia nobleman who volunteered to act eleven years later as counsel for John Brown after the raid at Harper's Ferry.

My father had been a delegate in the national convention that nominated Lewis Cass; my uncle Eustace was an ardent Democrat; so was I, of course; but a note in my diary shows that bias did not quite blind me: "Mr. Pendleton is certainly

one of the finest political speakers I have ever heard ; he possesses great fluency, much ingenuity, and ready wit. His speech was delivered beautifully—declamation unexceptionable—but his arguments specious.” Of course ! “ He was followed by Mr. J. S. Barbour in decidedly the ablest speech I ever heard. Barbour is a perfect orator. He has vast stores of information, and cannot be beaten at argument. His reply was the most scathing thing I ever heard. I regret, though, that he was so personally severe on Mr. Pendleton.”

Next day uncle Eustace took me to call on Barbour at his inn. We found him in a dressing-gown, his gouty foot swathed on a chair, his talk—well, the shining sword of yesterday had gone back to its scabbard.

The whirligig of itinerancy brought to our pulpit in 1848 a minister very different from any previous preacher—Norval Wilson. He was a well-bred man of fifty years. Although intellectual power looked out of his light grey eyes, it was from a somewhat caricaturish body. Small-headed, thin-visaged, beardless, with beak-like nose and receding chin, tall, lank, his movements awkward yet withal refined, Norval Wilson was a figure to excite curiosity. But never did preacher speak to my inmost soul like this man. He was almost inaudible when beginning his sermon, and his voice never rose to a high pitch ; but as he proceeded his eyes kindled with a strange fire, his tremulous tones came as if from æolian chords in his breast, and my heart lay like a charmed bird in his hand. There was no rhetorical trick, no sensational phrase, none of the stock stories of the pulpit, but convictions personally and profoundly thought out and uttered with few gestures and self-forgetting simplicity. His mission was to the individual heart ; his word came from the depth of his heart, and deep answered unto deep. Our eyes at times filled with happy tears. When the enchantment ceased I longed to clasp his knees.

But during my five months of vacation in Virginia (1848) I came under another influence not favourable to my religious emotions—that of my cousin John Moncure Daniel. His father of the same name, my mother's eldest brother, a physician in Stafford, was a classical scholar ; his mother (*née* Mitchell), whose marvellous beauty I remember, had some Spanish blood. Dr.

Daniel had recognised the genius of his eldest son and personally attended to his education. But both parents died prematurely, and their children found homes with their relatives. John had already found welcome in the Richmond home of Justice Daniel, his father's uncle, with whom he studied law. But he had such a capacity for study that without in the least neglecting legal studies he mastered uncle Peter's excellent library, which included the best old English literature, also many French classics. In this cultured home John gained his rare equipment for a literary career; had he been born in Old or New England, he would no doubt have become eminent as a man of letters. He had a fine imagination, a critical appreciation of music, and a style of writing equal to that of the best French writers—simple, lucid, artistic.

My cousin gave up the law because of his passion for literature, and was appointed librarian in one of the Richmond libraries. He wrote articles on literary and political affairs, and was invited to assist in editing the *Richmond Examiner* (Democratic). It was not long before this journal was known as "John M. Daniel's paper," and he became its owner and sole editor. It was the most famous journal ever published in the Southern States. It represented a new and formidable personality in politics. Slavery was harmonised, by a theory that Africans were not strictly human beings, with the most radical democratic equality. Scientific essays were cited, and Carlyle's latter-day pamphlet, "The Nigger Question," omitted from the American edition, appeared in the *Examiner*. The *Examiner* was always full of brilliant literature. It was the first Southern paper to review and applaud Emerson, Hawthorne, and other Northern writers, and now and then extracts were given from the anti-slavery writers, especially Theodore Parker. Daniel gave employment to Edgar A. Poe, some of whose poems first appeared in the *Examiner*. There was, however, a sinister side to the *Examiner*. It was as relentless as brilliant in its partisan attacks, and its frequent vivisection of politicians brought my cousin into many duels. I think he fought nine pistol duels, and although no hurt resulted to any antagonist—he had no skill with any weapon—it is my belief that he lost his prospect of domestic happiness by the reputation thus acquired. He was attached to a very

lovely lady, Miss Eliza Barbour, daughter of the orator already described. I knew her well, and have always believed that his suit might have succeeded had not her brother (afterwards senator) been frightened by the personalities and duels. He never married.

In the summer of 1848 the *Richmond Examiner* was filling our whole State with talk. Its press could hardly supply the demand. At every table, at every street corner, the subject was Daniel's last article. His wit, his brilliancy, admitted by friend and foe, fascinated me—I was seven years his junior—not without causing uneasiness to my father, who recognised in his brilliant nephew a seductive cynicism.

I had for some time been fond of writing, but had never ventured to offer anything to a journal. The first piece of mine ever printed was an obituary with some verses on the death of Eustace, aged four years, son of my uncle Eustace Conway; it appeared in the Fredericksburg paper (the *Democratic Recorder*) April 21, 1848.

But presently I was tempted to try something in the John Daniel vein. Uncle Richard Moncure was induced to accept nomination for the Legislature, in order that he might act on a committee to revise the Virginia code. He had no desire for legislative life, and to go even for a session must involve sacrifices in his profession; a good deal of indignation was therefore excited by the exceptional efforts of the Whigs to defeat him. His opponent was Charles Francis Suttle, six years later famous as the owner of the fugitive slave, Anthony Burns.

The chief precinct in Stafford County was Falmouth, and uncle Richard requested me to act as clerk at the election, which occurred April 27, 1848. The two dollars paid me for it was the first money I ever earned. Uncle Richard was elected, but the Whigs were sore, and I should have done better to let the matter rest. But the comedy of the election scene moved me to write a squib for the Fredericksburg paper, in which Mr. Suttle's corpulence was alluded to, his name punned on, and one of his supporters, not named, made fun of. This supporter was a worthy neighbour, a bachelor I believe, whose vote was challenged on the ground that he was not a householder. His claim to be a householder rested mainly on the circumstance that he

kept a cat. The discussion of this cat, the demand for authorities, all went on in the most serious and even stormy way, for the contest was critical, and this gravity made the scene so comic that an impish desire to describe it got hold of me. My little piece, "Richard is Himself Again," signed "Stafford," appeared in the Fredericksburg paper, and the first echo I heard was that young Falmouth Whigs were going about, horsewhip in hand, to discover "Stafford." Falmouth was seething about the skit, all the more because it was copied in the *Richmond Examiner*, and pronounced "lively." That did not compensate me for my father's ridicule of it, richly merited, and his discovery by my burning face that I was the culprit. This, my second venture in print, brought me chill-and-fever for my May Day.

The Fredericksburg paper (the *Democratic Recorder*) was edited by our relative, Samuel Greenhow Daniel, who had given up his profession (law), but I did not let him know the authorship of the skit just referred to, nor of others which I began to send in. My only confidant was my sister (in her twelfth year), to whom every piece was read. She invariably approved, and I cautiously dropped my manuscript in the paper's door-box. I wrote versifications signed "Cleofas II.," and tales signed "Alphonso III." One of these, "Scholarship," represents a Senior invited by a Freshman, a beau, to visit some pretty young ladies. The Freshman, in conversation with the ladies, airs some bad Latin, the Senior corrects him, but only to be himself put to confusion and apologised for before the ladies by the impudent Freshman. I mention this because twenty years later I witnessed at Stockholm, Sweden, a play with the same *motif*. Another of my stories was "Outaliski's Revenge," and opens with a tribute to the picturesque ruins of Potomac church. Of this church not one stone is now left upon another, but I can remember two walls with fine arches and windows. In my tale the merciless master-builder ("Hughes") has under him in building the church "Outaliski" and his son, last of the aborigines in Stafford, compelled by poverty to labour under some contract. Outaliski's son, forced while ill to do work heavier than he could, is struck by Hughes, falls, and dies. Outaliski continues his work, but when he and Hughes are together on the finished tower, the red man hurls the white tyrant to the earth,

then slays himself on his son's grave. The first solemnity in Potomac church was the funeral of Hughes, the second that of Outaliski. This was reprinted in the *New York Herald* as a veritable old legend, but it had no foundation at all.

But now the presidential campaign—as we rightly call it, for it is a war-born quadrennial revolution—reached an acute stage. I became much enlisted in the contest, and wrote a number of pseudonymous articles in a satirical vein. Such partisanship was not favourable to the piety of a young convert, but this was not the worst of it ; it was the main part of our democratic case against the Whig nominee (Zachary Taylor) that he refused to pronounce himself adverse to the rising schemes in the North for restrictive legislation against slavery. For the sake of one party victory, which we did not obtain, we must needs fire the Southern heart, irritate it against the North, and sow tares like the devil.

## CHAPTER VII.

College Life—President Peck—A Practical Joke—Reading—A Winter Adventure—Editing the *Collegian*—First Love—Orations at Graduation—My Secretaryship of a Southern Rights Society—My Public Lecture in Fredericksburg—Law Student and Deputy Clerk in Fauquier—Writing for the Press—Crisis wrought by Emerson—Visiting Washington—Listening to the Great Senators—My first Pamphlet, "Free Schools in Virginia"—A Camp-meeting in Loudoun—A Banquet at Warrenton to our Senators.

IN September, 1848, I returned to Carlisle alone, my brother's health having failed. I was youngest of the Seniors. Our speeches at Saturday declamation were original compositions. I straightway made a partisan speech, in the humorous vein, which was answered by Whig students. There was no ill-temper among us, but to politics were due many recitation-room failures. We were a miniature of the whole country; culture and presidential elections are not harmonious. For myself I had returned to college somewhat demoralised by the political campaign, and especially by an engendered anti-Northern feeling. John Daniel had asked me to write for the *Richmond Examiner*, and I went about Carlisle searching out something to ridicule or assail. The low condition of the free negroes made one letter, and tipsiness of students at Christmas another. I wrote only two of these crudities, I am glad to say, and there was truth in both, albeit exaggerated in my inflated Southernism.

Unfortunately the college also was demoralised that autumn. The institution, bereaved of President Emory, had gone on smoothly enough while the presidential functions were entrusted to our beloved M'Clintock, but on an evil day Rev. Dr. Jesse T. Peck was elected. Our immature minds could not appreciate his good qualities, while his large paunch, fat face, baby-like baldness, and pompous air impressed the whole college as a caricature. He had been a school teacher, and called us "boys," and we thought him inclined to discipline us like boys. Several

incidents occurred, one involving my chum, Henry Smith, another myself, which stirred my dislike of Peck into wrath ; and I tried a practical joke on him, which brought me remorse, and is mentioned here only because it has become a college tradition.

Several erroneous versions of this incident have appeared, and others besides myself have been connected with it. I am, however, the only culprit. A Methodist Conference was to gather at Staunton, Va., and President Peck was to read there a report on the college. Staunton was famous for its lunatic asylum, whose physician was Dr. Stribling. Under an assumed name, I wrote to Dr. Stribling that a harmless lunatic had gone off to Staunton, who imagined himself president of Dickinson College, and fancied he had a report to make to the Conference. Dr. Peck's appearance was described minutely, and Dr. Stribling was requested to detain him in comfort until his friends could attend. As Dr. Peck was travelling with other Methodist ministers, I could not suppose that the missive would have any result beyond raising a laugh on him ; but Dr. Peck was met by Dr. Stribling in his carriage, and supposed that such was the arrangement of the Conference for his entertainment. Of course the deception was soon discovered at the asylum. I perceived that Dr. Peck was convinced that I was the guilty one, and it must have been through him that my name became connected with the affair.

This was my first and last attempt at a practical joke. More than forty years later, when honoured at Dickinson College with a literary degree, I entered our venerable Union Philosophical Society, and the proceedings were suspended in order that I might be asked to give an exact account of the Staunton-Peck story. It was to me like being called up at Judgment Day, and after telling the story I remarked that though my eschatology might be unorthodox with regard to eternal punishment, the perpetuity of that affair was enough to show that in the world there is a sort of endless punishment. I found somewhat to my dismay that the legend was the thing by which I stood best in college traditions. For Dr. Peck appears to have gone on accumulating the students' ill will until at length he was removed, and later made a bishop.

After the November election (1848) I turned to literary

studies, reading especially the old English novelists. The new school of writers—Goethe, Emerson, Channing, George Sand, Hawthorne—were not in our libraries. At Dickinson College American literature consisted of Poe, Longfellow, Bryant, Irving, Paulding, Cooper, Prescott, R. H. Dana, Bancroft, Sparks, N. P. Willis, Mrs. Sigourney, Caroline Lee Hentz, and a few others, chiefly women, whose verses were widely read.

Byron had been forbidden me in my boyhood—for I was a precocious reader—and the phase of life when I might have enjoyed him passed. In later life my mother was distressed to find that I felt no interest in Byron. I was not much attracted by Walter Scott's novels or poetry, though I eagerly read his criticisms on other writers. John Daniel was an enthusiast about Shakespeare, but by the slowness of my appreciation of him I can recognise how much of the child was in me along with precocity in one or two directions.

I cannot remember that my religion had much to do with either theology or the Bible. Within four months after my "conversion" I wrote a piece for the Fredericksburg paper entitled "Curiosity," and find in it such levity as this: "You may talk about Eve's curiosity entailing death and misery on the human race—and such like—but don't tell me; is not desire for knowledge praiseworthy? Was not Eve assured, on the authority of Monsieur le Devil, that if she would eat the apple she would be a more sensible woman than she was then—what else?"

This was written when I was about sixteen, and I cannot discover in my notes anything leading to such a tone. I had never seen an unorthodox book.

In childhood we were forbidden to go barefoot after September for fear of catching cold, but one year I went off to a lonely place and disported my bare feet in the snow. No ill-effects resulted, and I had taken a step toward independence. But at college I had a serious encounter with Nature. A classmate of ability, John Henry Waters, afterwards scientific professor in Missouri, invited me to go home with him (Hartford County, Maryland) for the Christmas holidays (1848). We had to make the two days' journey in a half-covered buggy. Numb with cold, we stopped for the night at a country inn, and were

warmed by whiskey punch. This was my first taste of anything alcoholic, and after that I took my first cigar—without a qualm, moral or physical. I once published my belief that a true history of tobacco would be a history of constitutional freedom, and perhaps I might have added that in each American's first cigar there is a personal declaration of independence. By the blessing of tobacco we defied Zero, and passed a happy week in Maryland. But in returning we were overtaken by a fearful blizzard. The snow piled itself in great drifts, our wheels became clogged, and our horse began to give out. Half frozen as we were, it is probable that we were saved serious results by the necessity of pushing the buggy. At length the traces broke, we both mounted the one horse, and leaving the buggy, struggled on about two miles before we saw a house. There we found shelter and help in afterwards recovering our buggy. "We had an extremely hard time of it," says my diary, "but I know it has done me good—made me more self-reliant."

Early in 1849 I persuaded the students to start a monthly periodical. *The Collegian* lasted until vacation. I do not know whether there exists any file of the five numbers except that in my possession. I was the editor, but had a good staff. Several of the assistant professors contributed to it, and Professor Allen gave me a metrical translation of Cleanthes' Hymn to Jupiter. I have personal reason to congratulate myself that the articles were anonymous, mine being mostly trash; for the task of critical selection from the contributions of others allowed little time for taking pains with my own.

Also I fell in love. I was just seventeen, and this love was the second of my births. Catharine, sister of President Emory, though born on the same day as myself, was more mature in mind. She consented to an occasional correspondence after my departure, but not to a betrothal.

At the anniversary of our Union Philosophical Society I was appointed to deliver the "comic" speech; my piece, "The Philosophy of Language," was a tissue of bad puns, the puerility of which was perhaps less than the solemnity of my "oration" at the College Commencement. This subject was "Old Age," and the *Carlisle Herald* said "it was a badly chosen subject; as the orator is a very young man, all his theory is so, and no

more. He has not an atom of experience of the pleasures and pains of old age."

Had I been old enough to take that criticism to heart, I should not now have to look back upon so many early years in which I impressed congregations with error, and was praised for eloquence—the eloquence of inexperience!

My graduating oration was suggested by an anecdote told me by my friend Charles C. Tiffany, that Channing, when sixty, was asked what he had found the happiest period of life, and replied, "Sixty!"

Tiffany, now an eminent archdeacon in New York, was a Junior when I was a senior, but to him I looked up, for in general literary culture he was our most accomplished student.

Besides work on *The Collegian*, I wrote in the spring of 1849 five articles for the Fredericksburg paper, on "Old Writers of Fiction," those selected being Fielding, Smollett, Sterne, Ann Radcliffe, Horace Walpole. There is nothing original in these articles. I refer and defer a good deal to Scott, Ferrier, and Hazlitt. I do not know how I realised what I said incidentally in the last article (1849) of Maria Edgeworth: "She has done more in inculcating principles of morality, humanity—aye, of religion (though no direct mention of this latter is made in any of her works) than any authoress in the nineteenth century."

The breaking up of college life was sorrowful. On my last night there I did not go to bed at all, but hovered around the home of my beloved.

My selection of "Old Age" as the theme of my graduating oration strikes me now as pathetic. I graduated when about three months past my seventeenth birthday, or just at the time when I should have entered the college. I felt the burden of youth.

My only enthusiasm was for literature, but what channel was there in Virginia for that? None.

Although my father was in good pecuniary circumstances, he had a right to expect that I would select some profession, and I troubled him by continuing to write small pieces for the Fredericksburg paper and the *Richmond Examiner*, and one or two tales published in the *Southern Literary Messenger*. John Daniel paid for what I wrote in the *Examiner*, but there was no

prospect of finding in the South any support from unpolitical and untheological literature.

It was a time when a "Young Virginia" was rising up to promulgate the philosophical, sociological, and ethical excellence of slavery. In this direction able pamphlets were written by Beverly Wellford of Fredericksburg (now an eminent judge in Richmond) and George Fitzhugh of Port Royal, while a religious propaganda was carried on by the Rev. Mr. Stringfellow, of the Episcopal Church, and the Rev. Dr. William Smith, president of Randolph-Macon College (Methodist).

My father's moderation and his theoretically anti-slavery principles were rapidly becoming old-fashioned. He was troubled by the efforts of the younger generation to capture me, as I had by this time acquired some local reputation as a writer. My uncle, Judge Eustace Conway, was the personal friend of the South Carolina senator, John C. Calhoun, then the high priest of "Southern Rights," a statesman whose intellectual face, which I remember, and whose character comported little with the belligerent secessionism for which his constitutional principles were unconsciously preparing the way. John Daniel, extreme as he was, opposed Calhoun's demand for a constitutional amendment, guaranteeing to the Slave States an "equilibrium" with the Free States, a demand which, he said, "gives colour to the charge of desiring disunion." Nine years later this kind of radicalism receded into reactionism under the rage excited by John Brown's raid at Harper's Ferry.

My father and his younger brother Eustace had taken up opposite positions in the Methodist dispute about slavery, and a Southern Methodist church was built in Fredericksburg, uncle Eustace supplying the means. Personally the brothers were never estranged, and if they could have agreed on church politics the history of Methodism in Virginia might have been different; for Fredericksburg was the chief battlefield of the "wings," and my father and his brother were the lay leaders. Uncle Eustace was a favourite speaker in the presidential campaign of 1848. I remember some politician saying to him, "I never carry my pew into politics, nor politics into the pew." "I carry both into both," replied my uncle. But I was not yet up to that; I stood by my father in pew politics, with my uncle in party politics.

A few months after my graduation I was invited to attend a meeting in the law office of Thomas B. Barton, whose son William (afterwards judge) was the chief mover in the matter. The object of the gathering was the formation of a Southern Rights Association. Only about a dozen were present, but they were persons of large influence. Some asserted the right of secession, though no immediate action of the kind was advocated. I was flattered by being appointed secretary of the meeting, but cannot find my notes of the proceedings. Extreme pro-Southern resolutions were passed.

My father heard of this meeting, and a few days later, when we were riding together to Stafford Court House, asked me about it. I told him all that had occurred; he went on in silence for some moments, then said quietly, "Don't be the fool of those people! Slavery is a doomed institution."

How often have I remembered those words! Yet at the time they only mystified me. Slavery seemed to be as permanent a fact as the Rappahannock River; neither my father nor any of the Methodists were proposing to abolish slavery, and I was inclining to the view that the opposition to it was merely traditional.

In the following year (1850) Fredericksburg society began to take notice of me. Certain writings were recognised as mine, and were discussed. Meanwhile I was beginning to feel restless and eager to enter upon some kind of occupation. My parents did not understand this, and one day I disappeared from home, much to their consternation. I went to Richmond in order to see John Daniel, and find whether he could employ me on the *Examiner*. When I entered the office Edgar A. Poe was just leaving it. John Daniel said that if I had finally broken away from home and made up my mind to devote myself to journalism, he would give me work, but he would not seek to influence me in the matter. He would continue to pay me for what I might write. My uncle Eustace Conway was in the Legislature. He and his family made my brief sojourn pleasant, but he persuaded me to return home.

An incident in Richmond made a deep impression on me. On Sunday morning I accompanied uncle Eustace's wife and her sister, Fanny Tomlin, to the old Episcopal church on Shockoe Hill,

and after the benediction my aunt stopped to speak to the clergyman and his family, with whom she was acquainted. We were in the vestry, and there the clergyman invited us to enjoy the remainder of the bread and wine he had just been using in the Communion Service. I was shocked by the swiftness with which the bread and wine had lost their sacredness.

Immediately after leaving home I had sent a note to my father saying where I had gone, and that I did not mention it to him beforehand because I was afraid he would prevent my going. I staid away only a few days, and on my return found him angry. Nevertheless he recognised that a crisis was reached. He had really been hoping that I would adopt the ministerial profession, but now suggested studying law. I agreed to that, and soon afterwards he heard that Colonel William Fowke Phillips, clerk of Fauquier County and a learned lawyer, was in want of a deputy clerk. For my services Colonel Phillips offered me residence in his home and supervision of my law studies.

While these arrangements were going on privately, I was honoured by a number of gentlemen in Fredericksburg with a request to deliver a lecture in the town hall. This lecture was given in the evening of March 1, 1850. Alas! still under the burden of youth, I selected for my theme "Pantheism." The large hall was crowded with the finest people of our region, among whom, however, only the clergymen knew the meaning of Pantheism. Not even they saw the danger in my respectful sentiments towards Pantheism, and Pope gained applause for his couplet :—

All are but parts of one stupendous whole  
Whose body Nature is and God the soul.

Orthodoxy was delighted with my illustration of the Trinity by the three primary colours blended in light. On the whole I appeared to get through fairly well, and received congratulations, but two days later W. H. Fitzhugh, a sagacious lawyer, said, "You will make yourself unpopular by speaking above the vulgar comprehension."

Unpopular! I had no desire for popularity, no dreams of anything beyond writing what would please certain intellectual people in Virginia and Carlisle.

On March 3 I received from our Fredericksburg preacher, Norval Wilson, a certificate of church-membership. In giving it to me he said, "St. Paul before he preached tarried three years in Arabia—now Warrenton may be your Arabia."

The next day I went to Alexandria, and from there travelled to Warrenton on a stage coach. I find in my journal this entry: "Read in the coach, from the *Richmond Examiner*, 'The Great Stone Face'; the writer of it, Nathaniel Hawthorne, is a striking writer. Man of great reflection."

On March 9, James Duncan, a handsome young Methodist preacher, staying at the house of Colonel Phillips, read to us Daniel Webster's famous seventh-of-March speech. The reader's voice was musical, and the impression made upon me by the speech is thus recorded: "Heavens, what a Titan is Webster! I should like to see his dust subjected to chemical analysis after he's dead." While I was writing this, the best Northern men were in mourning for that same speech. Emerson was saying of his former idol, "Every drop of his blood has eyes that look downward." John Daniel printed in the *Examiner* Theodore Parker's scathing discourse upon Webster's speech, and pronounced Webster an "elephantine coward."

The home of Colonel Phillips was a pleasant, old-fashioned house in a pretty garden. The family consisted of his two daughters and widowed sister. The ladies were Methodists, but Colonel Phillips ignored all churches. No efforts were spared by these ladies to make my new home happy. The colonel was a superb old gentleman in appearance, and a radical Democrat. He was exact in his office, and my work there was an instruction in precision; the change of a word might involve much. I studied law with much interest, and closely followed the pleadings and trials in the court-house. The lawyers were able; Robert Eden Scott, James Marshall (kinsman of the famous Chief Justice), Inman Horner, Samuel Chilton, William Payne, kept up the high traditions of the Virginia Bar.

The Hon. Robert E. Scott charmed me by his fine personality and manners, but he was the leading Whig, and "Young Virginia" being politically infallible, I listened to his public speeches mainly to describe their fallacies in the *Examiner*.

Alas, what a poison is partisanship! My uncle Eustace, who

was a lawyer first and a politician after, and my father, who was above all a magistrate, were able to honour such jurists as Judge Scott and his son Robert, but in my new zeal I resented the course of the latter in the Virginia Legislature (1848) on the Slavery question. My uncle Eustace had introduced into the Legislature resolutions hostile to the "Wilmot Proviso," then before Congress. These resolutions affirmed that any such restriction on the equality of Southern institutions would justify secession of the Slave States from the Union. Robert Eden Scott led the opposition to these "Conway resolutions," as they were called, but the gallant statesman was defeated. Though he and uncle Eustace remained good friends, Scott was vehemently attacked by the Southern "fire-eaters," and defeated at the election that followed. In 1850 he was again a candidate, and on March 25 addressed the people in the court-house at Warrenton. I have in my scrapbook of crudities my report of this address in the *Richmond Examiner*, interlarded with flings at the speaker, to whose great and brave thought I was blind. He began by a noble deprecation of party spirit, which he declared a more potent influence than that of religion or morality, and warned the people that any attempt to erect a Southern Confederacy would end in their ruin.

Here, then, in Robert E. Scott was a real nobleman, representative of the best traditions of Virginia, and I knew it not. His tall, dignified figure, his fine blonde head and face, his charming candour and simplicity, are visible to me across the more than half century elapsed since I last saw him. This admirable man went on suffering political defeat and humiliation for his independence and fidelity to his principles, and was one of the many honourable Virginians who carried their State against secession, after the election of Lincoln, but were forced to succumb by the President's calling on Virginia for troops to fight South Carolina. Robert E. Scott did not take up arms in the Civil War, but was killed by a company of Northern soldiers because he remonstrated with them for exploiting his homestead.

At Warrenton there was a small Episcopalian church with a good preacher (Mr. Norton), and the Methodist church there being hostile to our Baltimore Conference, I often attended Mr. Norton's, and taught a class in his Sunday school. On

Sunday afternoon it was my chief happiness to sit in the gallery playing on the little organ, alone except for the old negro sexton who blew the bellows for me, and found delight in the music.

I read the law-books rapidly, and copied carefully, but there were sometimes two or three days in the week when there was nothing for me to do. Now and then I rode over to the Fauquier Springs to see Miss Rebecca Green (afterwards Mrs. Shackelford), who played finely on the piano and introduced me to Beethoven, Mozart, and Weber. One piece, "Musetto de Nina"—wild, dreamy, pathetic—inspired me to write a romance. I called it "Confessions of a Composer."

O my poor dead self—aimless, morbid, passionately longing for it knew not what—pass to thy tardy cremation! For I cannot recognise myself in this spirit's blank misgivings as it moves about in worlds unreal.

An illness in April was followed by a return to Falmouth for a few weeks, and there I entered upon a spiritual crisis of whose import I was long unconscious. One bright morning I took up my old flint-lock gun and wandered down the left bank of the Rappahannock. In earlier years I had been fond of shooting, but had not touched a gun for nearly two years, and perhaps took it on this occasion to try and revive in myself some of the boyish spirit that had left me. For I was listless and unhappy. I had begun to feel a repugnance to the idea of being a county lawyer, and was interested only in literature. With my flint-lock I took along an old volume of *Blackwood's Magazine*. At the top of the first hill below Falmouth, and about halfway to the old mansion called "Chatham," there is near the road a pretty spring, from which I drank, with a folded leaf for my cup, and sat down to look at the scenery. The road was little used, and I was rather startled by some rustling in the bushes. Two mulatto children had come to get water in their cans—a boy and a girl of seven or eight years—and, as befitted the warm day and their Arcadian age, both entirely naked. Adam and Eve could not have been more unconscious than these pretty statuettes of yellow bronze. I talked with them a little, found them rather bright, and, when they had disappeared, meditated more deeply than ever before on the condition of their race in America.

I then turned to my "Blackwood." In the number for December, 1847, the first article was entitled "Emerson"—a name previously unknown to me. The very first extract—it was from Emerson's essay on History—fixed itself in me like an arrow :—

It is remarkable that involuntarily we always read as superior beings. Universal history, the poets, the romancers, do not in their stateliest pictures—in the sacerdotal, the imperial palaces, in the triumphs of will or of genius—anywhere lose our ear, anywhere make us feel that we intrude, that this is for better men ; but rather is it true, that in their grandest strokes we feel most at home. All that Shakespeare says of the king, yonder slip of a boy that reads in the corner feels to be true of himself.

Precisely what there was in these words to influence my life I cannot say. I have a vague remembrance of sitting there beside the spring a long time meditating on Emerson's use of the phrase "true of himself." What "self" was this ? Clearly not the same as "soul," with which I was so familiar.

Whatever may have been the questionings, some revelation there was. A spiritual crisis, as I have said, though it concerned only myself. Through a little rift I caught a glimpse of a vault beyond the familiar sky, from which flowed a spirit that was subtly imbreeding discontent in me, bereaving me of faith in myself, rendering me a mere source of anxiety to those around me. And what was I doing out there with a gun trying to kill happy little creatures of earth and sky ? Was it for this I was born ?

There is a legend that old Governor Spottswood, wishing to introduce the English skylark into Virginia, brought over a shipload of them and set them free in our meadows. I had heard it talked of in my childhood, and one day felt sure that I heard the notes of a marvellous bird, and saw it ascending toward the sky. My story raised a smile when I told it at home, and I had to agree that no skylark survived from those brought over nearly a hundred and fifty years before. But it was no fancy that now in my maturer life Emerson had set free in my heart a winged thought that sang a new song and soared—whither ?

I went home and laid aside my gun, never again to be touched. I thought again and again of those naked little mulattoes at the spring, whose minds were no doubt as pretty as their bodies, but without a stitch of knowledge. I remembered how my mother had been warned not to teach coloured folk to read. I recognised on the streets debased faces of white people, their poverty of mind and body. They appeared worse off than the coloured people. Above them all my inner skylark sang :—

Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
To you and all mankind.

But who more powerless than I to bring glad tidings to anybody !

Straightway I went to Chester White's bookstore, Fredericksburg. "Emerson's Arithmetic" was in stock, but Emerson's Essays unknown. However, the bookseller procured a copy of the "First Series," and I was deep in it when John Daniel passed a few days in Fredericksburg.

I had remarked that since I had come upon the track of Emerson, cousin John had been writing about him in the *Richmond Examiner*. What I never knew until lately was that John had made an effort to found a liberal church at Richmond, and had actually delivered a sermon to a small company in the long-closed Universalist church there. In our talk in Fredericksburg he urged me to go into journalism. "Whatever you do," he said, "don't be a preacher. It is a wretched profession. Its dependence is on absurd dogmas. The Trinity is a theological invention, and hell-fire simply ridiculous." He wrote for me a list of books that I ought to read, and among them were Emerson's works. I told him that I had got hold of Emerson. I find notes of that conversation (spring of 1850) :—

We got to talking of Emerson. He asked me which of his writings I liked best. I said I had read few, but of those I had been most fascinated by the Essay on Love. He said he liked that better than any other. "It should not," he said, "be called an essay nor a treatise, nor anything of that sort ; there is no name for so divine a thing—not even poem. It is more like a fine, glorious strain of music. The heavens are opened in it, and you see everything." He asked me how I was agreeing with Poe. I said I had read him, and

was growing, I feared, in love with "Eureka"; but I was surprised that in an article in the *Southern Literary Messenger* he had called "Eureka" the Parthenon of Reason. "So it is," he answered, "with the assumption of intuition he makes." We conversed on Poe's poetry. "'The Raven,'" says John, "is as one of Beethoven's sublime overtures." I have noticed that in his comparisons John finds nothing that he thinks so high as comparing a thing to music. This shows his great soul. It reminds me of Plato calling all the grandeur of Nature music.

When this talk occurred I was just beyond my eighteenth year, and had not really entered on any theological inquiry. This I suppose may account for the fact that what my cousin said about the Trinity and other dogmas made no serious impression on me at the time. There was a cynicism in his contempt for the clerical profession with which I could not sympathise, while the problems that absorbed me were more fundamental than any creeds. Or so it seemed to me. But I was filled with wonder by John's conversational power and his vast information. I was too young to realise the loneliness in Virginia of a young man—he was in his twenty-fifth year—of such genius and scholarship. I considered him, with his famous *Examiner*, able to say what he thought and make himself heard, the most enviable man in Virginia. What I could not see until too late was that here was a heart full of love, a mind akin to Emerson, bound fast to the rôle of fighting politicians with pen and pencil. John Daniel's cynicism was largely the result of his spiritual loneliness.

Before returning to Warrenton I passed nearly a week in Washington. It was an exciting week in Congress, the so-called "Omnibus" bill being before the Senate—a bill made up of compromises on all points relating to slavery. I heard speeches from Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, also Senators Foote, Soulé, Berrien, Clemens, Yulee, and would have heard Cass if he had spoken loud enough. As it was, there was nothing to relieve my disappointment at finding only greatness of paunch in that man whom my father had nominated for the presidency, and for whom I had hurraed myself hoarse. A year later I recognised a certain massiveness of head and strength of countenance in Senator Cass.

It was on May 21, 1850, that I first heard Webster. It was

in answer to the Southern Senator Yulee, who arraigned President Taylor for sending an armed cruiser to the coast of Cuba. The President, he declared, had no constitutional right to perform any warlike act without the consent of Congress. Webster came down on Yulee as softly and as crushingly as a trip-hammer. The ship was really sent to watch the filibusters preparing on the coast of Florida to seize Cuba. Webster did not pronounce the word "filibuster" at all; he declared that the United States was friendly with Spain, and so long as that country did not transfer Cuba to any other country, it was the duty of our government to see that no movements hostile to Spain were fitted out on our coasts. He spoke for about twenty minutes, sonorously, but without heat, and the Senate listened breathlessly. He stood there like some time-darkened minster-tower. He was an institution. I do not remember any reply.

Two days later (May 23) I witnessed the skirmish between Henry Clay and Senator Soule of Louisiana. Soule was the finest product of the old French elements in his State; he was handsome, free from mannerism, and his French accent rather agreeable. He spoke for more than an hour, and commanded the closest attention—justly, for his was almost the only speech against the "Omnibus" that rested the case simply on argument. His arguments were sometimes original, and he was interrupted by Foote and Downs, Southerners who knew their section was getting the lion's share by the pretended "Compromise," but he was never confused. Henry Clay was visibly agitated, as he well might be, for his darling measure was brought into the presence of the new pro-slavery spirit of the Young South, to which the Union was not an end but a means. When Soule had finished Clay sprang to his feet and charged him with expressing disunion sentiments. Several voices cried "No," and Soule quietly and modestly said that it was perhaps due to his imperfect English that Clay had so misunderstood him. Clay had not misunderstood, but succeeded in what he aimed at; namely, to secure a repudiation of "disunionism" from the much-applauded orator. He then apologised. Daniel Webster I remarked listening closely to Clay, and once he made a suggestion to him. Clay said that if Soule desired he would agree to modify a clause so as to declare that a territorial legislature should pass no laws

"either to admit or exclude slavery." Webster interpolated, "respecting the establishment or exclusion of slavery." "Certainly," cried Clay, deferentially repeating Webster's phrase.

As the secretary of the first Southern Rights Association formed in northern Virginia, I was delighted with Soulé, and wrote a note about him to the *Richmond Examiner*. From my seat in the gallery I searched out the historic figures in the Senate, most of them victims on the altar of the great idol—the Union. Clay, Cass, Webster, had offered their souls on that altar, and their bodies were fast following their perished hopes of presidency. Two of the ablest senators present were soon to lose their senatorial lives—Benton and Corwin. They had perceived that it was not the small band of abolitionists demanding peaceful disunion, but militant and aggressive Slavery, that was besieging the Union.

The seat of Calhoun was conspicuously vacant. I had seen that aged senator when on his way to South Carolina, never to return. He was welcomed at our Fredericksburg station with an address of homage by my uncle Eustace Conway, in behalf of the town. It no doubt consoled his last days that Benton had lost his election to the Senate, but there was this great man from Missouri still making his sparkling speeches. I thought him the grandest man in the body, speaking with a clearness, dignity, and simplicity that quite charmed me.

Ewbank's Patent Office Report, a volume of essays by Horace Greeley, and Horace Mann's Report on the Schools of Massachusetts, were acquisitions made in Washington that week. On my way to Warrenton I sat perched on the stage with these companions, becoming aware of the existence of a great world where people were cultured, well to do, and engaged with manifold schemes for the improvement and happiness of mankind. Horace Greeley wrote in warm sympathy with socialism, and his *Tribune* made me acquainted with all the theories and enterprises of Robert Owen and Fanny Wright which were then filling the Northern air. I discussed these subjects with the young men of Warrenton, and with Richard Smith, a teacher and able editor of the town paper, "The Flag of '98," and soon felt that I was an object of misgivings. I was studying Emerson, too, and remember a long and heated discussion in Judge Tyler's house with his son Randolph and others on Berkeley's idealism,

in which I maintained the non-existence of matter against all their ridicule.

August 11, 1850. Sunday. A lovely day without—but quiet Sabbath thoughts are keen to me. Took a very long walk from town alone, and out toward the house of the late Judge Scott. Thought much, and took the idea of writing an Allegory on the subject of a mind voyaging the unsafe boundless ocean of speculations. Came back and read Hawthorne's delightful "Twice-told Tales" till church time.

On the following day, having heard that my dear friends Professor Marshall and his wife, from Carlisle, had arrived at Paris, Va., I rode twenty miles to see them. Alas! they brought me tidings that my beloved at Carlisle was in decline from consumption, and that our marriage must no more be thought of. The only comment in my journal is "O God, O God, what a cloud!"

In my various rides through this part of Virginia, I had seen a beautiful country, fertile, healthy, abounding with game, also with birds of song and of brilliant plumage. But everywhere swarmed the indigent white people, displaced, reduced to idleness by the slaves who supplanted them in farm and household, their wretched cabins crowded with children growing up in ignorance, vice, and hopelessness. Many of these children—I sometimes stopped to talk with them—were comely, as if there lingered with them traits of well-bred ancestry. For many of them there was not even a Sunday school within reach, and they could not read. Horace Mann's Massachusetts Report on Free Schools had given me eyes to see the deplorable condition of Virginia educationally, and the purpose arose in me to begin a propaganda for free schools in our State. I find a note of September 16, 1850: "Was taken sick while writing a pamphlet on Education."

In 1850 a convention assembled in Virginia to revise the Constitution. I was convinced that for lack of free schools our State was falling behind the other great States of which she was once leader, and worried over some letters written from Virginia by Horace Greeley to his paper. I wrote a letter to the *Tribune*, which answered me editorially, and declared, September 7, 1850: "Never will Virginia's White children be generally

schooled until her Black ones shall cease to be sold. Our friend may be sure of this."

I gave in my pamphlet a table of eleven counties in Virginia which had adopted school systems exempting the poor children from payment. These reported fair success, but the *Tribune's* paragraph was quoted to stimulate Virginia pride.

The pamphlet bore the following inscription:—

[TO THE STATE CONVENTION OF 1850.]

Gentlemen: Trustful that you will "hear me for my cause," which is that of our State and our Humanity according to my earnest conviction, I dedicate these pages to you "with whom is all our hope."

THE WRITER.

Warrenton, Va., October, 1850.

Although uncle Greenhow Daniel, editor and owner of the *Recorder*, reduced the charges for printing my pamphlet to the lowest figure (\$50), it was the heaviest expenditure I had ever made out of my own savings. About 500 copies were printed, and not one was put on sale; I sent them to every newspaper, public man, professor, preacher in Virginia, whose address I could learn.

The personal response to my pamphlet was gratifying enough, but the scheme was entirely ignored. Of course, those it was intended to benefit—the poor whites—could not read, and never heard of it. I had written in a painstaking way, and invested my subject with facts and items about our State of general interest, and in later life I have learned from one and another that the essay did produce some effect on influential men. But the social, physical, and financial conditions of Virginia at the time were little comprehended by me, in my nineteenth year. There was little or no longing for education among the poor whites—probably more among the negroes. I was expecting echoes where there were no hills.

But this I did not admit at once. I had used a medium which might be very good to teach the taught, but not to awaken and move the uninstructed and the indolent. The people could be reached only by the living voice. In the August of this year I had attended a very large Methodist camp-meeting in Loudoun County, and passed several days there. Here I had been surrounded by Methodists who were the gentry of that region, wealthy,

refined, educated, and saw what a tremendous force Methodism was in Virginia. I also witnessed the effect on large assemblies producible by sermons. I was deeply moved by all this. I felt that I had a message for those masses of people, and I wondered how it could be delivered, unless from the pulpit?

The star-and-stripe cult was not known in the mid-years of the nineteenth century. I felt some pride in Virginia as the mother of States and statesmen, but found it difficult to credit Webster, Everett, and other Compromisers with any real sentiment about the Union. After the "Omnibus" Bill was passed, a banquet was given at Warrenton to our (U.S.) senators, Mason and Hunter to which I subscribed because they were our senators. I had great esteem for R. M. T. Hunter—a modest and learned gentleman—but Mason was a hard, arrogant man. He was the hero of the "fire-eating" Southerners because he had cracked the whip over the "King Cotton" over the North, and brought them to their knees in uttermost abjectness. He had framed the Fugitive Slave Law, and the Northerners had consented to become slave-hounds and hunt down men and women escaping from bondage. Not many recoveries of slaves were anticipated, but Mason was hailed as the victor. This was the tone of the banquet at Warrenton.

Mason had brought with him to Warrenton the "renegade Quaker," Ellwood Fisher, who was going about speaking and writing in defence of slavery as the true foundation of society. Colonel Phillips brought those two to his house, where I had some conversation with them. I do not remember anything of the conversation, except that I disgusted Mason by expressing sympathy with Senator Dodge's "Homestead Law," by which it was proposed to give homesteads in the territories to families that would reside on and cultivate them; also by trying to interest him in free schools. He disclaimed interest in such schemes. And I, on my part, was not interested in the petty politics and politicians of our region which he discussed with Colonel Phillips. I was interested in humanity, in the education and salvation of the people; I was interested too in the negro race as a race, and not as merely a number of pawns on the board where politicians were playing a game of South versus North. Although I had reached a theory of the inferiority of

that race to the white race, I was dealing with the subject seriously, was searching for principles, and I had not enough sectionalism to admire the proud provincialism of Mason.

Soon after General Zachary Taylor was inaugurated in the presidency he passed through Fredericksburg. I saw him and wrote in the paper some ridicule of him. When he died I was in Warrenton. He had given indications that his administration would not be altogether favourable to slavery, and I heard a good many pro-slavery radicals express their satisfaction with his removal by Providence. It was also whispered about that Providence might have employed a poisoner. These things shocked me. I had not liked the President, but the spirit that rejoiced in his death belonged to an atmosphere of enmity I never breathed.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Education and Slavery—A Mob Murder—The Agassiz Theory of Race  
My Essay on the Negro Race—My Real "Conversion"—Transcendental Methodism—Preparations for the Methodist Ministry—A Disappointment in Love—The Shadrach Case in Congress—A Slave's Vision—Rockville Circuit—My First Sermons.

My pamphlet on Free Schools excited no discussion in Virginia. My only important sympathisers were Law Professor Minor at the University of Virginia and Samuel M. Janney, Quaker preacher in Loudoun. My father was pleased, though he did not express agreement.

I looked eagerly into my *New York Tribune* to see what Greeley would say about it. His paragraph (editorial) was friendly, but I only remember the closing words: "Virginia white children will never be educated till its coloured children are free." This shaft went very deep into me, for I found that pro-slavery philosophers considered the Free School system a dangerous Northern "ism."

My mere Virginianism had received a number of blows during my residence in Warrenton—notably by the mob murder of a free negro named Grayson, at Culpeper Court House. The man had been sentenced for murdering a Mr. Miller, but the evidence against him was weak, while the local demand for a victim was furious. The Court of Appeals had ordered a new trial, to take place at Warrenton. Grayson was taken from gaol by a mob of several hundred—who, as their victim was nobody's property, met but feeble resistance—and hanged, protesting his innocence to the last. On this I wrote in the Warrenton paper, July 20, 1850: "The whole affair would read better among the records of the Spanish Inquisition, or of the feudal age of Britain, than by the light of the full noon of the nineteenth century."

The innocence of Grayson was afterwards established, and that of most victims of the bloodhounds called lynchmen would be by fair trial.

This was the only case of the negro murder called "lynching" that I ever heard of before the Union war, and it caused indignation throughout the South.

I never up to that time had heard any person say a word against the rectitude of slavery. The nearest to it was what my father had said, "It is a doomed institution." It was too close to my eyes to be seen. That it would ever end was not even prophesied by its Northern antagonists. Now, however, when a moral cause—universal education—had taken possession of me, slavery barred my way in every direction. Before my radical Jeffersonianism the negro stood demanding recognition as a man and a brother; else he must be treated as an inferior animal.

At this moment the new theory of Agassiz appeared—that the races of mankind are not from a single pair. I had conversed with Professor Baird of the Smithsonian Institution on the subject, and found that he agreed with Agassiz. In June, 1850, Agassiz delivered a lecture on the subject in Cambridge, Mass., which was expanded into a long article in the *Christian Examiner* for July. In this manifesto the professor argued only by implication against the unity of human species; but where he feared to tread my crudity rushed in. It was not the vanity of a youth under nineteen, but a spirit struggling for existence amid fatal conditions, which led me to announce in the Franklin Lyceum (Warrenton), of which I was secretary, a theory that the negro was not a man within the meaning of the Declaration of Independence. All of the other members, though not anti-slavery, exclaimed against the "infidelity" of the theory, though none answered my argument that negroes, if human, were entitled to liberty. My eccentric views were talked about, and I found myself the centre of a religious tempest in little Warrenton. If the negro was not descended from Adam he had not, like us whites, inherited depravity. And wherefore our missions to non-Caucasian races?

I sat down as wrangler of the new theory, surrounded myself with books on races, mental philosophy, and Biblical criticism, and achieved fifteen closely written letter pages to prove that mankind are not derived from one pair; that the "Caucasian" race is the highest species; and that this supreme race has the same right of dominion over the lower species of his genus that

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This was the only case of the negro murder called "lynching" that I ever heard of before the Union war, and it caused indignation throughout the South.

I never up to that time had heard any person say a word against the rectitude of slavery. The nearest to it was what my father had said, "It is a doomed institution." It was too close to my eyes to be seen. That it would ever end was not even prophesied by its Northern antagonists. Now, however, when a moral cause—universal education—had taken possession of me, slavery barred my way in every direction. Before my radical Jeffersonianism the negro stood demanding recognition as a man and a brother; else he must be treated as an inferior animal.

At this moment the new theory of Agassiz appeared—that the races of mankind are not from a single pair. I had conversed with Professor Baird of the Smithsonian Institution on the subject, and found that he agreed with Agassiz. In June, 1850, Agassiz delivered a lecture on the subject in Cambridge, Mass., which was expanded into a long article in the *Christian Examiner* for July. In this manifesto the professor argued only by implication against the unity of human species; but where he feared to tread my crudity rushed in. It was not the vanity of a youth under nineteen, but a spirit struggling for existence amid fatal conditions, which led me to announce in the Franklin Lyceum (Warrenton), of which I was secretary, a theory that the negro was not a man within the meaning of the Declaration of Independence. All of the other members, though not anti-slavery, exclaimed against the "infidelity" of the theory, though none answered my argument that negroes, if human, were entitled to liberty. My eccentric views were talked about, and I found myself the centre of a religious tempest in little Warrenton. If the negro was not descended from Adam he had not, like us whites, inherited depravity. And wherefore our missions to non-Caucasian races?

I sat down as wrangler of the new theory, surrounded myself with books on races, mental philosophy, and Biblical criticism, and achieved fifteen closely written letter pages to prove that mankind are not derived from one pair; that the "Caucasian" race is the highest species; and that this supreme race has the same right of dominion over the lower species of his genus that

he has over quadrupeds—the same right in kind but not degree.

This elaborate essay was not printed, and I had forgot that it was ever written until fifty years later it came forth from other wrappings of my dead self. It is dated "Warrenton, 1 Dec., 1850." It vaguely recalls to me the moral crisis in my life. Whether it was the dumb answers of the coloured servant moving about the house, cheerfully yielding me unrequited services, or whether my eyes recognised in the completed essay a fallacy in the assumption of a standard of humanity not warranted by the facts, the paper was thrown aside. The so-called "conversion" of my college days had been a boyish delusion; the real conversion came now at the end of 1850. I had caught a vision of my superficiality, casuistry, perhaps also of the error with which I could consign a whole race to degradation. I do not remember whether or not my theory of negro inferiority was consciously altered, but an overwhelming sense of my own inferiority came upon me. The last words of my Warrenton diary are, "Had a violent fever that night." The fever was mental and spiritual more than physical; when it passed away it left me with a determination to devote my life to the elevation and welfare of my fellow-beings, white and black. The man of Nazareth had drawn near and said, "What thou doest to the least of these my brothers, thou art doing to me."

In December, 1850, a note to my father told him that I had abandoned all idea of practising at the bar, that I should return home at Christmas, and should apply for admission to the Baltimore Methodist Conference as a minister. Parents, relatives, friends, were amazed. By my writings in the Virginia journals and in the *Southern Literary Messenger*, I had acquired sufficient reputation to gain me a good position in Richmond journalism. I had studied enough law to take my place at the bar, and having eminent relatives in that profession my success in it seemed to be assured. I was not in poverty and was moving in the best social circles. Why then this sudden resolution to become a Methodist preacher? It was long a mystery to myself, but Emerson was at the bottom of it. I knew by my experience to what depth a teacher's word might strike in an open heart. O that I could be even in a small way able to uplift fainting hearts and guide

the groping as that great spirit had uplifted me, and was now opening a fair horizon before me !

Had I got hold of Emerson's Address to the Cambridge Divinity graduates I might have discovered the inconsistency of his philosophy with any form of orthodoxy ; but I had only his first and second series of Essays. These did away with the bounds between sacred and secular by making both sacred. So free from theological negations are these Essays that they leavened my Methodism imperceptibly by idealising the whole of life as Methodism over-sanctified it. His transcendentalism corresponded with Methodist transcendentalism at various points. The personal character of spiritual life, soul finding the divine in the solitude of the individual life, the mission ordained for every human being—these are interpretations of the Methodist doctrines of miraculous conversion, the inward witness of the Spirit, progressive sanctification, and the divine " call " to the ministry. I believe that my study of Emerson's Essays raised Methodism in my eyes, for this religious organisation was, in Virginia, alive, earnest, and not much interested in dogmas. I cannot remember ever hearing a Methodist sermon about the Trinity.

Just after I had resolved to enter the ministry a letter came from Kate Emory giving a cheerful account of visits to her friends in Maryland, and with no intimation of ill-health ; but she said our correspondence must cease. I had just begun to study Hebrew (with Rev. Dr. McPhail, Presbyterian), and the works of Wesley, Adam Clarke, Watson ; but all books were dropped, and I went off to Carlisle to learn my fate. She who was to decide it was thin and pale, but no considerations of health affected me in the least. She had been teased about me, my letters had become warm enough to frighten her, she cared for no other man so much, but she could as yet only offer me her friendship. So I went off to hope, but with a dull feeling of hopelessness wrote in my journal, " Man was never made, I believe, to go or look backward."

On my homeward way I passed a week in Washington. " Senator Hunter smuggled me into the Senate lobby so that I heard the great debate on the Boston riot." This was on February 18, 1851. Three days before, when the fugitive slave Shadrach was on trial in Boston, the case was postponed till

next day, and at that moment about forty coloured men swarmed into the court-room, Shadrach became undistinguishable among them, and was spirited away to Canada. Not a blow was struck. "Nobody injured, nobody wronged, but simply a chattel transformed into a man," wrote Garrison in the *Liberator*, but the incident caused excitement in Congress and was described as a "riot." The new Fugitive Slave Law was beginning to bear its fatal fruits. Only a few months before I had been assisting at the banquet given at Warrenton to its author, Senator Mason, but now for the first time discovered that the new law was of serious importance. I shall never forget the wrath that shrivelled up the already wrinkled face of Henry Clay, nor his sharp voice, as he leaped forward and cried, "This outrage is the greater because it was by people not of our race, by persons who possess no part in our political system, and the question arises whether we shall have a government of white men or of blacks." \* I was not anti-slavery, and did not doubt at the time that it was a murderous attack on the court, but Clay's speech and manner grated on me, and I was more pleased with the speech of Jefferson Davis. The Massachusetts Senator Davis had tried to soothe the wrath of the compromisers who had predicted the reign of peace to follow their "Omnibus Bill"; but when he alluded to the "common sentiment" in Massachusetts against the rendition of fugitives, a voice (that of Hale, I think) cried, "Universal sentiment." Whereupon Jefferson Davis said calmly, "If that be so the law is dead in that State. Wherever mobs can rule, and law is silenced beneath tumult, this is a wholly impracticable government. It was not organised as one of force, its strength is moral, and moral only. I for one will never give my vote to extend a single arm of the Federal power for the coercion of Massachusetts." This was in reply to Foote, who said he had private knowledge that the President, Fillmore, had ordered

\* In the "Life of Garrison" (vol. iii., p. 326), Clay is said to have used the phrase "a band who are not of our people." The *Congressional Globe* rightly reports the word "race," but for the rest I have an impression that the speech is considerably manipulated in the official report. On May 23 at Albany, Daniel Webster declared the rescue of Shadrach "an act of clear treason," but being, according to Clay, by persons with "no part in our political system," there was no treason in the case.

Commodore Read at Philadelphia to use all of his marine force if necessary to sustain this law, and cited the action of President Washington in marching into Pennsylvania to crush the "Whiskey Rebellion."

I have said that I went to college too soon—barely turned sixteen—but what must be said of my first entrance on the ministry? It was on March 17, 1851, my nineteenth birthday, that I was appointed to Rockville Circuit, Maryland, one of the most important in the Baltimore Conference.

There was excitement among our emotionally pious servants at my entering the ministry. On the eve of my departure one of these, Eliza Gwynn, came late in the evening and desired me to go out to her husband, Dunmore. He met me in a little porch and said, "Mars' Monc"—but I will omit his dialect—"I have had a vision. I saw you standing on a hill, and one came and blew a trumpet, and there came many people from the South; and another came and blew a trumpet, and a great number came from the North; and one sounded a third trumpet, and many came from the East; and a fourth trumpet, and a multitude from the West; and a host was around you, and to them all you spoke the word of the Lord."

I had no such ambition for myself as Dunmore had for me, and had misgivings as to even a fair success. The vision made on me only an impression of the love our servants bore me. Out there under the stars these humble people, whom I had been pronouncing not quite human scientifically, pressed my hand, and invoked blessings on my head. I went off to my room, deeply moved. It was midnight. I so entered on my Methodist ministry. The black man gave me the only consecration I ever received.

Early next morning our hostler brought to the door the handsome horse which my father had purchased for me, with fine new saddle, and the indispensable saddle-bags—well stocked with what might be needed on my two days' journey to Rockville. The only advice my father gave me was against relapse into politics. "Let the potsherds of the earth strive with the potsherds of the earth: seek higher things, my son!"

My road lay past the homes of my near relatives—Glencairn, Carmora, Erleslie—and I little dreamed that it was the beginning

of a journey that would take me so very far away from them all. At Stafford Court House I received an ovation from my Methodist uncle (Valentine) and aunts; my grandparents being too gracious to reveal any regrets they may have felt at my adopting such a profession.\* At Aquia Church, weird in its solitude and dilapidation, I paused for a time, and tried to picture my great-great-grandfather, Parson Moncure, perched in the little black pulpit high up a column, and his congregation as they gathered there a hundred years before. He was the only clergyman in our family line, and of all his sermons, written during a long ministry, not one sentence is left. But the spiritual bequest may be all the more important for being unwritten.

I stopped at old Pohick church, to which the Washingtons occasionally came from Mount Vernon, and where Rev. Mason Weems, who called himself rector of Mount Vernon, sometimes preached. First biographer of George Washington, originator of the cherry-tree fable, laughed at now, Weems was yet a striking figure in his time. Bishop Meade, whose preaching I remember, and others whom I knew, had kindly memories of Weems.

The road I was travelling was more lonely than in Weems's time (there was no railway to Washington), and there was in my boyhood a legend that robbers had their quarters in Aquia church. If so, they must have long before sought some more frequented highway. I was startled at meeting one wayfarer between Pohick church and Alexandria—a poor Corsican with hand-organ, to whose tunes I listened.

Rockville Circuit was flourishing, and required hard work for two preachers. My senior was the Rev. William Prettyman. Methodist itinerancy usually required that the junior (unmarried) minister on a circuit should have no fixed abode; he was supposed to live on horseback, with his wardrobe and library in his saddle-bags; and otherwise to be entertained in the houses of the "brethren" near each meeting-house. But a room was provided for the junior in the cottage of the widow Wilson, a mile out of Rockville. Thither I could always repair when I desired not to be a guest. Sister Wilson was a motherly hostess, the cottage and garden pleasant, and I was always glad

\* "April 1.—I left grandpa's on this ominous day for my circuit."  
—*MS. Journal.*

to get back to their freedom and pretty walks. But I could rarely stay anywhere more than a day, as there were about ten appointments to be filled each week, and these meeting-houses were distant from each other five, ten, fifteen miles.

My first sermon was given in a small private house, "brother English's," at 3 p.m. Saturday, April 6. Text, Gen. xlix. 18, "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord." My first sermon in a church was the next morning, April 7, at "Goshen," on Gen. iv. 9, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

The junior preacher is an annual, and his first appearance an important event. Goshen was far away in the woods; but the region was populous, and when I rode up that Sunday morning I was appalled by the number of vehicles. And when I looked down on the crowded seats and felt every eye fixed on me, I had a sort of pulpit-fright. I felt that there would be a disappointment. Had a written sermon been admissible I might have had confidence, but one small page held all my notes.

I knew nothing whatever of anyone before me. Were they educated? Were they fond of rhetoric? They were apparently well-to-do people, and some impression was on me that a good many belonged to fashionable churches. Not one of them knew that I was about to give my first sermon in a church. I had taken pains with the sermon, and suppose there may have been some response, for I find that soon after I selected it to give on my first appearance in Washington.

Among my old papers I have now and then come upon mouldy skeletons of my earliest sermons. I cannot think what flesh and blood clothed them, but find that I was in morbid reaction against the worldliness my boyhood envied. On one occasion, hearing that some Methodist young ladies had danced at a ball, I preached so severely against such pleasures that the family resented it and joined another church.

## CHAPTER IX.

My Early Ministry—Probation—Webster in the Supreme Court—The Gaines Case—F. W. Newman's Book on "The Soul"—Studying on Horseback—A Round on Stafford Circuit—Sermon at Palmouth—Samuel Janney—Quaker Meeting—Roger Brooke—Fairhill School—Correspondence with Emerson—Visits to the Widows of John Q. Adams and Alexander Hamilton—Knox in Washington—Death of my Brother Peyton.

MY uncle Dr. John Henry Daniel said to me, when I was leaving home, "So you are going to be a journeyman soul-saver." I did not begin life with that burden on me, and, when it came, was too young to question whether it was part of me—my hunch—or a pack of outside things like that strapped on Bunyan's pilgrim. My pack was symbolised in my saddle-bags, where the Bible, Emerson's Essays, Watson's Theology, Carlyle's Latter Day Pamphlets, Jeremy Taylor's Holy Living and Dying, the Methodist Discipline, and Coleridge's Aids to Reflection, got on harmoniously—for a time.

Dr. Daniel's label, "a journeyman soul-saver," told true in a sense; it was really my own enmeshed soul I had to save. I was struggling at the centre of an invisible web of outer influences and hereditary forces. I was without wisdom. How many blunders I made in my sermons, with which I took so much pains, I know not, but I remember a friendly hint from the wife of the Hon. Bowie Davis that a sermon of mine was too "agrarian." In another case the recoil was more serious; it came through my presiding elder, who said, "From what I hear, a sermon of yours on the new birth was too profound." This troubled me deeply. I had supposed that Jesus meant to be profound, and put much study into the sermon, the only favourable response to which was from an aged negro woman, who, long after I had left Methodism, laid her hand on my head and said, "I never knew what the Lord meant by our being born again until I heard you preach about it, and, bless the Lord, it's been plain ever since!"

My early training in law courts determined my method of preaching. In preparing a sermon I fixed on some main point which I considered of vital importance, and dealt with it as if I were pleading before judge and jury. This method was not Methodism. I was in continual danger of being "too profound," and though congregations were interested in my sermons they brought me more reputation for eccentricity than for eloquence. This, however, was not a matter of concern to me. Ambition for fame and popularity was not among my faults. My real mission was personal—to individuals. In each neighbourhood on my circuit there were some whom I came to know with a certain intimacy, aspiring souls whose confidences were given me. However far away I might be, they rose before me when I was preparing for that appointment. No general applause could give me the happiness felt when these guests of my heart met me with smiles of recognition, or clasped my hand with gratitude.

It was an agricultural region, in which crime and even vices were rare. Slavery existed only in its mildest form, and there was no pauper population to excite my reformatory zeal. Nor was there even any sectarian prejudice to combat; the county was divided up between denominations friendly to each other and hospitable to me. My personal influence was thus necessarily humanised. I could not carry on any *propaganda* of Methodism in the homes of non-Methodist gentlemen and ladies who entertained me, even had I felt so inclined, without showing my religion more narrow than theirs.

My belief is that I gradually preached myself out of the creeds in trying to prove them by my lawyer-like method. Moreover, I had the habit of cross-examining the sermons of leading preachers, finding statements that in a law court would have told against their case. At a camp-meeting in 1851 I learned that our presiding elder was about to preach on the resurrection of the body. I slipped into his hand the following query:—

A soldier fallen in the field remains unburied; his body mingles with the sod, springs up in the grass; cattle graze there and atoms of the soldier's body become beef; the beef is eaten by a man who suddenly dies while in him are particles of the soldier's body, conveyed to him by the grass-fed beef. Thus two men die with the

same material substance in them. How can there be an exact resurrection of both of those bodies as they were at the moment of death?

The preacher read out the query, and said, "All things are possible with God." Nothing more. It made a profound impression on me that a divine should take refuge in a phrase. The doctrine in question involved the verbal inspiration of Scripture and the "Apostles' Creed."

I made a note of another thing at this camp-meeting. The Rev. Lyttleton Morgan, an accomplished preacher, declared that in his Passion and Crucifixion Christ suffered all that the whole human race must have suffered in hell to all eternity but for that sacrifice. At dinner some ministers demurred at this doctrine; I maintained that it appeared to be a logical deduction from our theory of the Atonement.

Rockville Circuit being near Washington, I was able at times to pass a few days in the capital, where I had relatives and acquaintances. I attended the debates in Congress, and in the Supreme Court, where I heard Daniel Webster's speech in the famous Gaines case. It was a powerful speech, impressively delivered, but I had sufficient experience in courts to recognise several passages meant for the fashionable audience with which the room was crowded. He was against the appellant, Mrs. Gaines, who was pleading for her legitimacy as well as property, and described his client persistently besieged by litigation as a rock beaten by ocean waves. He drew all eyes on pleasant Myra Gaines, and I remember thinking the metaphor infelicitous. My sympathies were with the lady, and the "rock" might symbolise the stony heart of the man holding on to her property. But I was so interested in Webster's look and manner that, in my ignorance of the evidence, my attention to what he said was fitful, and the speech was obliterated by the strange romance rehearsed by the judges in their decisions. For it was in two volumes, the minority opinion of Justice Wayne and Justice Daniel (my grand-uncle) in favour of Mrs. Gaines being especially thrilling. No American novelist would venture on such a tale of intrigue, adultery, bigamy, disguises, betrayal, as those justices searched through unshrinkingly, ignoring the company present.

On one of my visits to Washington I heard a sermon from the famous Asbury Roszel which lifted the vast audience to

exultation and joy. His subject was the kingdom of God and triumphs of the Cross, and he began by declaring that it was universally agreed that ideal government was the rule of one supreme and competent individual head. This Carlylean sentiment uttered in the capital of the so-called Republic gave me some food for thought at the time ; and I remembered it when I awakened to the anomaly of disowning as a republican the paraphernalia of royalty, while as a preacher I was using texts and hymns about thrones and crowns and sceptres, and worshipping a king.

My interest in party politics had declined ; I began to study large human issues. One matter that I entered into in 1851 was International Copyright. On this subject I wrote an article which appeared in the *National Intelligencer*. I took the manuscript to the office, and there saw the venerable Joseph Gales, who founded the paper, and W. W. Seaton, the editor. Mr. Seaton remarked that I was "a very young man to be in holy orders," and after glancing at the article said he was entirely in sympathy with it. In that article I appealed to Senator Sumner to take up the matter, and thenceforth he sent me his speeches.

I little imagined how much personal interest I was to have some years later in Gales and Seaton, who were among the founders of the Unitarian church in Washington. I used sometimes to saunter into the bookshop of Franck Taylor, or that of his brother Hudson Taylor, afterwards intimate Unitarian friends, before I knew that there was a Unitarian church in Washington. From one of them I bought a book that deeply moved me : "The Soul : her Sorrows and her Aspirations. By Francis William Newman." I took this book to heart before I was conscious of my unorthodoxy, nothing in it then suggesting to me that the author was an unbeliever in supernaturalism.

The setting given by Newman's book to Charles Wesley's hymn, "Come, O thou Traveller unknown," made that hymn my inspiration, and it has been my song in many a night wherein I have wrestled with phantoms.

But my phantoms were not phantasms, and brought no horrors into those beautiful woods and roads of Montgomery County. These were my study. I was wont to start off to my

appointments early, in order that I might have no need to ride fast, and when clear of a village, take from my saddle-bags my Emerson, my Coleridge, or Newman, and, throwing the reins on my horse's neck, read and read, or paused to think on some point.

I remember that in reading Emerson repeatedly I seemed never to read the same essay as before : whether it was the new morning, or that I had mentally travelled to a new point of view, there was always something I had not previously entered into. His thoughts were mother-thoughts, to use Balzac's word. Over the ideas were shining ideals that made the world beautiful to me ; the woods and flowers and birds amid which I passed made a continuous chorus for all this poetry and wit and wisdom. And science also ; from Emerson I derived facts about nature that filled me with wonder. On one of my visits to Professor Baird at the Smithsonian Institution, I talked of these statements ; he was startled that I should be reading Emerson, with whose writings he was acquainted. At the end of our talk Baird said, "Whatever may be thought of Emerson's particular views of nature, there can be no question about the nature in him, and in his writings : that is true and beautiful."

A college-mate, Newman Hank, was the preacher on Stafford Circuit, Virginia, and it was arranged that for one round of appointments he and I should exchange circuits. I thus preached for a month among those who had known me from childhood. Though few of them were Methodists, they all came to hear me, and I suppose many were disappointed. I had formerly spoken in their debating societies with the facility of inexperience, but was no longer so fluent.

The culminating event was my sermon in our own town, Falmouth. How often had I sat in that building listening to sermons—Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian—occasionally falling under the spell of some orator who made me think its pulpit the summit of the world ! How large that church in my childhood, and how grand its assemblage of all the beauty and wealth of the neighbourhood ! When I stood in the pulpit and realised how small the room was, and could recognise every face, and observe every changing expression, and when I saw before me my parents, my sister and brothers, with almost painful anxiety in their loving eyes, strange emotions came to me : the first of

my phantoms drew near and whispered, "Are you sure, perfectly sure, that the seeds you are about to sow in these hearts that cherish you are the simple truth of your own heart and thought?" My theme was that every human being is on earth for a purpose. The ideal life was that whose first words were "I must be about my Father's business," and the last, "It is finished."

When we reached home my uncle Dr. John Henry Daniel said, "There was a vein of Calvinism running all through that sermon." "I hate Calvinism," cried I. "No matter: the idea of individual predestination was in your sermon. And it may be true!" My father was gratified by the sermon, but he said, with a laugh, "One thing is certain, Monc: should the devil ever aim at a Methodist preacher, you'll be safe!"

In this sermon, which ignored hell and heaven, and dealt with religion as the guide and consecration of life on earth, I had unconsciously taken the first steps in my "Earthward Pilgrimage." When I returned to my own circuit, a burden was on me that could not roll off before the cross.

Our most cultured congregation was at Brookville, a village named after the race of which Roger Brooke was at this time the chief. Our pretty Methodist Church there was attended by some Episcopalian families—Halls, Magruders, Donalds, Coulters—who adopted me personally. The finest mansion was that of John Hall, who insisted on my staying at his house when I was in the neighbourhood. He was an admirable gentleman, and so friendly with the Methodists that they were pleased at the hospitality shown their minister. Mrs. Hall, a grand woman intellectually and physically, was a daughter of Roger Brooke. She had been "disowned" by the Quakers for marrying "out of meeting," but it was a mere formality; they all loved her just as much. Her liberalism had leavened the families around her. She was not interested in theology, and never went to any church, but encouraged her lovely daughters (of ten and twelve years) to enjoy Sunday like any other day. After some months she discovered that some of my views resembled those of her father, and desired me to visit him.

There was a flourishing settlement of Hicksite Quakers at Sandy Spring, near Brookville, but I never met one of them, nor knew anything about them. "Hicksite" was a meaningless

word to me. "Uncle Roger," their preacher, was spoken of throughout Montgomery County as the best and wisest of men and I desired to meet him. When I afterwards learned that "Hicksite" was equivalent to "unorthodox," it was easy to understand why none of them should seek the acquaintance of a Methodist minister.

The Quakers assembled on first and fourth days, and happening one Wednesday to pass their meeting-house, I entered impelled by curiosity. Most of those present were in Quaker dress, which I did not find unbecoming for the ladies, perhaps because the wearers were refined and some of them pretty. After a half-hour's silence a venerable man of very striking appearance, over six feet in height and his long head full of force, arose, laid aside his hat, and in a low voice, in strange contrast with his great figure, uttered these words: "Walk in the light while ye are children of the light, lest darkness come upon you." Not a word more. He resumed his seat and hat, and after a few minutes' silence shook hands with the person next him; then all shook hands and the meeting ended.

I rode briskly to my appointment, and went on with my usual duties. But this, my first Quaker experience, had to be digested. The old gentleman, with his Solomonic face (it was Roger Brooke), who had broken the silence with but one text, had given that text, by its very insulation and modification, a mystical suggestiveness.

After I had attended the Quaker meeting several times, it was heard of by my Methodist friends. One of these, a worthy mechanic, told me that Samuel Janney had preached in the Quaker meeting, and once said that "the blood of Jesus could no more save a man than the blood of a bullock." This brother's eyes were searching though kindly.

Roger Brooke belonged to the same family as that of Roger Brooke Taney, then Chief Justice of the United States. His advice, opinion, arbitration, were sought for in all that region. Despite anti-slavery and rationalistic convictions, he leavened all Montgomery County with tolerance.\*

\* Helen Clark, daughter of the Right Hon. John Bright, showed me a diary written by Mr. Bright's grandmother, Rachel Wilson, while travelling in America in 1768-69. She was a much esteemed Quaker.

One morning, as I was riding off from the Quaker meeting, a youth overtook me and said uncle Roger wished to speak to me. I turned and approached the old gentleman's carriage. He said, "I have seen thee at one or two of our meetings. If thee can find it convenient to go home with us to dinner, we shall be glad to have thee." The faces of his wife and daughter-in-law beamed their welcome, and I accepted the invitation. The old mansion, "Brooke Grove," contained antique furniture, and the neatness bespoke good housekeeping. So also did the dinner, for these Maryland Quakers knew the importance of good living to high thinking.

There was nothing sanctimonious about this home of the leading Quaker. Uncle Roger had a delicate humour, and the ladies beauty and wit. The bonnet and shawl laid aside, there appeared the perfectly fitting "mouse-colour" gown of rich material, with unfigured lace folded over the neck, and at a fancy ball it might be thought somewhat coquettish.

They were fairly acquainted with current literature, and though not yet introduced to Emerson, were already readers of Carlyle. I gained more information about the country, about the interesting characters, about people in my own congregations, than I had picked up in my circuit-riding. After dinner uncle Roger and I were sitting alone on the veranda, taking our smoke—he with his old-fashioned pipe—and he mentioned that one of his granddaughters had rallied him on having altered a Scripture text in the meeting. "In the simplicity of my heart I said what came to me, and answered her that if it was not what is written in the Bible, I hope it is none the less true." I afterwards learned that he had added in his reply, "Perhaps it was the New Testament writer who did not get the words quite right." I asked him what was the difference between "Hicksite" and "orthodox" Quakers; but he turned it off with an anecdote of one of his neighbours who, when asked the same question, had replied, "Well, you see, the orthodox Quakers will insist that the Devil has horns, while we say the Devil is an ass." I spoke of the Methodist ministers being like the Quakers, "called preacher, and gives a pleasant account of her visit to the Friends at Sandy Springs, where she was received in the home of Roger Brooke. This was the grandfather of our "uncle Roger."

by the Spirit " to preach, and he said, with a smile, " But when you go to an appointment, what if the Spirit doesn't move you to say anything ? "

Uncle Roger had something else on his mind to talk to me about. He inquired my impression of the Quaker neighbourhood generally. I said he was the first Quaker I had met, but the assembly I had seen in their meeting had made an impression on me of intelligence and refinement. For the rest, their houses were pretty and their farms bore witness to better culture than those in other parts of the county. " That I believe is generally conceded to us," he answered ; " and how does thee explain this superiority of our farms ? " I suggested that it was probably due to their means and to the length of time their farms had been under culture. The venerable man was silent for a minute, then fixed on me his shrewd eyes and said, " Has it ever occurred to thee that it may be because of our paying wages to all who work for us ? "

For the first time I found myself face to face with an avowed abolitionist ! My interest in politics had lessened, but I remained a Southerner, and this economic arraignment of slavery came with some shock. He saw this and turned from the subject to talk of their educational work, advising me to visit Fairhill, the Friends' school for young ladies.

The principal of the school was William Henry Farquhar, and on my first visit there I heard from him an admirable lecture in his course on History. He had adopted the novel method of beginning his course with the present day and travelling backward. He had begun with the World's Fair, and got as far as Napoleon I.—subject of the lecture I heard. It was masterly. And the whole school—the lovely girls in their tidy Quaker dresses, their sweet voices and manners, the elegance and order everywhere—filled me with wonder. By this garden of beauty and culture I had been passing for six months, never imagining the scene within.

The lecture closed the morning exercises, and I had an opportunity for addressing the pupils. I was not an intruder, but taken there by Mrs. Charles Farquhar, daughter of Roger Brooke and sister-in-law of the principal, so I did not have the excuse that it would not be " in season " to try and save some of these

sweet sinners from the flames of hell. It was the obvious duty of the Methodist preacher on Rockville Circuit to cry : " O ye fair maids of Fair Hill, this whited sepulchre of unbelief—not one of you aware of your depravity, nor regenerate through the blessed bloodshed—your brilliant teacher is luring you to hell ! Those soft eyes of yours will be lifted in torment, those rosebud mouths call for a drop of water to cool your parched tongues ; all your affection, gentleness, and virtues are but filthy rags, unless you believe in the Trinity, the blood atonement, and in the innate corruption of every heart in this room ! "

But when the junior preacher is made, the susceptible youth is not unmade. According to Lucian, Cupid was reproached by his mother Venus for permitting the Muses to remain single, and invisibly went to their abode with his arrows ; but when he discovered the beautiful arts with which the Muses were occupied, he had not the heart to disturb them, and softly crept away. This pagan parable of a little god's momentary godlessness may partly suggest why no gospel arrows were shot that day in Fairhill school ; but had I to rewrite Lucian's tale I should add that Cupid went off himself stuck all over with arrows from the Muses' eyes.

However, Cupid had nothing to do with the softly feathered and imperceptible arrows that were going into my Methodism from the Quakers, in their homes even more than in this school. I found myself introduced to a circle of refined and cultivated ladies whose homes were cheerful, whose charities were constant, whose manners were attractive, whose virtues were recognised by their most orthodox neighbours ; *yet what I was preaching as the essentials of Christianity were unknown among them.* These beautiful homes were formed without terror of hell, without any cries of what shall we do to be saved. How had these lovely maidens and young men been trained to every virtue, to domestic affections and happiness ? I never discussed theology with them ; but their lives, their beautiful spirit, their homes, did away with my moral fears, and as the dogmas paled, creedless freedom began to flush with warm life. These good and sweet women, who said no word against my dogmas, unconsciously to themselves or me, charmed me away from the dogmatic habitat.

When I left the Baltimore Conference, the Quakers were

given by many Methodists the discredit of having undermined my faith, but their only contribution to my new faith was in enabling me to judge the unorthodox tree by its fruits of culture and character. If theology were ever discussed by them, it was I who introduced the subject. They had no proselytising spirit. I thought of joining the Quaker Society, but Roger Brooke advised me not to do so. "Thou wilt find among us," he said, "a good many prejudices, for instance, against music, of which thou art fond, and while thou art mentally growing would it be well to commit thyself to any organised society?" \*

How often have I had to ponder those words of Jesus, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Men do not forsake their God; He forsakes them. It is the God of the creeds that first forsakes us. More and more the dogmas come into collision with plain truth; every child's clear eyes contradict the guilty phantasy of inherited depravity, every compassionate sentiment abhors the notions of hell, and salvation by human sacrifice. Yet our tender associations, our affections, are intertwined with these falsities, and we cling to them till they forsake us. For more than a year I was like one flung from a foundered ship holding on to a raft till it went to pieces, then to a floating log till buffeted off—to every stick, every straw. One after another the gods forsake us—forsake our commonsense, our reason, our justice, our humanity.

In the autumn of my first ministerial year I had to take stock of what was left me that could honestly be preached in Methodist pulpits. About the Trinity I was not much concerned; the morally repulsive dogmas and atrocities ascribed to the deity in the Bible became impossible. What, then, was "salvation"? I heard from Roger Brooke this sermon, "He shall save the people from their sins, not *in* them." It is the briefest sermon I ever heard, but it gave me a Christianity for one year, for it was sustained by my affections. They were keen, and the thought of turning my old home in Falmouth into a house of

\* When Benjamin Hallowell, the eminent teacher in Alexandria, Va., came to reside at Sandy Spring, I had many interesting talks with him, but found that even his philosophical mind could not free itself from the prejudice against musical culture. The musical faculty, he admitted, had some uses—e.g. that mothers might sing lullabies.

mourning, and grieving the hearts of my friends in Carlisle, and congregations that so trusted me, appeared worse than death. My affections were at times rack and thumbscrew.

I had no friend who could help me on the intellectual, moral, and philosophical points involved. Roger Brooke and William Henry Farquhar were rationalists by birthright ; they had never had any dogmas to unlearn, nor had they to suffer the pain of being sundered from relatives and friends. In my loneliness I stretched appealing hands to Emerson. After his death my friend Edward Emerson sent me my letters to his father, and the first is dated at Rockville, November 4, 1851. Without any conventional opening (how could I call my prophet " Dear Sir " ?) my poor trembling letter begins with a request to know where the *Dial* can be purchased, and proceeds :—

I will here take the liberty of saying what nothing but a concern as deep as Eternity should make me say. I am a minister of the Christian Religion—the only way for the world to re-enter Paradise, in my earnest belief. I have just commenced that office at the call of the Holy Ghost, now in my twentieth year. About a year ago I commenced reading your writings. I have read them all and studied them sentence by sentence. I have shed many burning tears over them ; because you gain my assent to Laws which, when I see how they would act on the affairs of life, I have not courage to practise. By the Law sin revives and I die. I sometimes feel as if you made for me a second Fall from which there is no redemption by any atonement.

To this there came a gracious response :—

CONCORD, MASS., 13<sup>th</sup> November, 1851.

DEAR SIR,—I fear you will not be able, except at some chance auction, to obtain any set of the *Dial*. In fact, smaller editions were printed of the later and latest numbers, which increases the difficulty.

I am interested by your kind interest in my writings, but you have not let me sufficiently into your own habit of thought to enable me to speak to it with much precision. But I believe what interests both you and me most of all things, and whether we know it or not, is the morals of intellect ; in other words, that no man is worth his room in the world who is not commanded by a legitimate object of thought. The earth is full of frivolous people who are bending their

whole force and the force of nations on trifles, and these are baptised with every grand and holy name, remaining, of course, totally inadequate to occupy any mind; and so sceptics are made. A true soul will disdain to be moved except by what natively commands it, though it should go sad and solitary in search of its master a thousand years. The few superior persons in each community are so by their steadiness to reality and their neglect of appearances. This is the euphrasy and rue that purge the intellect and ensure insight. Its full rewards are slow but sure; and yet I think it has its reward on the instant, inasmuch as simplicity and grandeur are always better than dapperiness. But I will not spin out these saws farther, but hasten to thank you for your frank and friendly letter, and to wish you the best deliverance in that contest to which every soul must go alone.

Yours, in all good hope,

R. W. EMERSON.

This letter I acknowledged with a longer one (December 12, 1851), in which I say: "I have very many correspondents, but I might almost say yours is the only letter that was ever written to me."

Early in 1852 Kossuth visited Washington, and enthusiasm for him and his cause carried me there. The Washington pulpits had not yet said anything about slaves at our own doors, but it was easy to be enthusiastic for liberty as far away as Hungary, and so the preachers all paid homage to Kossuth. I stopped at the house of Rev. Lyttleton Morgan, whose wife was an authoress, and her sister, Carrie Dallam, the most attractive friend I had in Washington. With her I went to the New Year "Levee" at the White House, and also to call on the widow of President John Quincy Adams, a handsome and entertaining old lady. I also think it was then and by her that I was taken to see the widow of Alexander Hamilton. Mayor Seaton entered, and in courtly style took her hand in both of his and kissed it, bending low. She was still (her ninety-fifth year) a cheerful and handsome lady, gracious and dignified. Her narratives of society in that city, as she remembered it, sounded like ancient legends. I remember particularly her account of a president's drawing-room in the time of President Jackson. Mrs. Hamilton was, I believe, the first to introduce ices into the country. At any rate she told me that President Jackson having tasted ices at her house

resolved to have some at his next reception—for in those days, so simple and small were the receptions that refreshments were provided. Mrs. Hamilton related that at the next reception the guests were seen melting each spoonful of ice-cream with their breath preparatory to swallowing it. The reception itself was, she said, more like a large tea-party than anything else.

Kossuth was a rather small man with a pale face, a soft eye, a poetic and pathetic expression, and a winning voice. He spoke English well, and his accent added to his eloquence by reminding us of his country, for which he was pleading. I followed him about Washington, to the Capitol, the White House, and the State Department, listening with rapt heart to his speeches, and weeping for Hungary. I find this note (undated): "Kossuth received to-day a large number of gentlemen and ladies, to whom he discoursed eloquently of the wrongs of Hungary. Many were moved to tears, and some ladies presented their rings and other trinkets for the cause of the oppressed. A large slave-auction took place at Alexandria just across the river on the same day." \*

But alas! I presently had a tragedy of my own to weep for, the death of my elder brother, Peyton. He had long suffered from the *sequelæ* of scarlatina, but, nevertheless, had studied law and begun practice. During the summer of 1851 he visited me on my circuit (Rockville) and accompanied me to St. James Camp-meeting. He was deeply affected on hearing me preach, and approached the "Mourner's Bench." No "conversion" occurred, and he returned home (Falmouth) in a sad mood. Then there arose in him the abhorrence of dogmas and the ideal of a church of pure reason, absolutely creedless and unecclesiastical, uniting all mankind. Alas, little did he know that his brother, even myself, was at that moment in mortal inward struggle with a creed! But this I learned only after his death. For at

\* When this entry was written no word had reached me of the vain efforts of abolitionists to get from Kossuth an expression of sympathy with their cause. The "independence" pleaded for by Kossuth had no more to do with personal freedom than this had to do with the "independence" fought for in 1776 by American slaveholders, who forced Jefferson to strike out of the Declaration its anti-slavery section.

that critical moment he died of typhoid fever—March 13, 1852, fourteen days after his twenty-second birthday. There was bequeathed to my later years the miserable reflection that possibly he might have survived the attack but for the lowering of his strength by agitation under my preaching at the camp-meeting.

## CHAPTER IX.

Rev. Dr. Smith, Apostle of Slavery—"Grace Greenwood"—Truth and "the Truth"—Frederick Circuit, Maryland—Home and Garden—Black Becky—My Sermon on Peace—Samuel Tyler—Mental Sufferings—First Love Clouded—A Sermon at Carlisle—Essays on Jesuitism—"Without the Camp"—My New Creed—In Baltimore with Unitarians and Quakers—Sylvester Judd—Dr. Burnap—Death of Becky—Leaving Methodism—Partings.

THE Baltimore Conference (February, 1852) gave me Frederick Circuit, now "Liberty Circuit," in Frederick County, Md. Heavy-hearted for the loss of my brother, I started from home, March 26, for my new field.

On the Potomac boat I met Rev. Dr. William Smith (Methodist), president of Randolph-Macon College, Virginia, distinguished by his propaganda of a new pro-slavery sociology. We had some conversation, and he asked me, "What is the principle of slavery?" I answered, "It has no principle." He said, "The principle of slavery is clearly the submission of one will to another, and government is inconceivable without it." "Then," said I, "government is inconceivably wrong." He said, "You ought to marry Fanny Wright. The best government is where the two elements of slavery and freedom balance. I only wish I had you in my senior class, to which I lecture on this subject every week."

Thus were the winds sown from which whirlwinds were presently reaped! \*

I was not much interested in the territorial restriction of

\* A quarter of a century later there came to my house in London a lady, from Virginia who had fads that would have astounded Fanny Wright, among others a belief that by a certain moral and mental and physical regimen death might be entirely escaped. My wife became rather fond of her. She wrote a little book on the subject which she wished to sell, and we bought copies to aid her. She was a daughter of Dr. William Smith, the pro-slavery apostle.

slavery, but had called at the house of Dr. Gamaliel Bailey editor of the *National Era*, to see "Grace Greenwood" (afterwards Mrs. Lippincott), who was writing for the paper. In the course of our conversation I told her that the negroes in our Virginia county, and on my Maryland circuit, were not suffering. She advised me to read a story in course of publication in the *National Era* by a Mrs. Stowe, entitled "Uncle Tom's Cabin." It was long before any noise was made about that novel, and only then that I read it.

It may appear to my reader that the degree of scepticism in my mind was sufficient to prevent my continuing in the ministry. But there were enough relics of Methodism in me to render it a duty to contest every doubt. That, indeed, was the tradition of Methodism, some of whose foremost men had struggled through Doubting Castle. How could I at twenty be absolutely certain that my doubts were not temptations?

Moreover, I had to work out alone the newest and most complex of ethical problems—the obligation of self-truthfulness. Never had I heard from teacher or preacher any exhortation to be true to myself. For "*the truth*"—God's truth, the Gospel's truth—I must suffer any martyrdom, but "truth"—that is, my own inner conviction—unless it confirmed "*the truth*" was defiance of Almighty God, and fidelity to it mere infidelity of a sinful nature.

It was hard as yet to say just what I was rejecting, and whether with further study and experience I might not, like Coleridge, discover that my abhorrence of the dogmas of eternal punishment, human depravity, etc., might not be mere misinterpretation of them. I retained some kind of Satan in my faith, so that my love of the Father was ardent, tender, and my abhorrence of evil as yet without any philosophical apology for it as if permitted by God.

My new circuit was large and laborious. Near a pretty village (Jefferson) was a cottage home for the junior preacher, the owner being aged "Mother Rice." The only other person in the cottage besides Mother Rice was a "black but comely" young African, "Becky." She was the blackest person I ever saw, but had no other negroid characters, her features being almost classic. We depended on Becky for everything. A more

perfect cook, a neater washerwoman, never lived, and a happier heart never beat. Across all the years I can see her sunshiny, ebony face, and hear her happy hymns while hanging out clothes, or weeding the garden.

The garden! Eden had not sweeter roses; every flower was there; it was the haunt of humming-birds. My rooms were on the ground floor, and opened into this garden. I used to manage so as to get a good deal of time in my "Seclusaval," as I called it, and there I read beautiful books that brought heaven into harmony with the roses and humming-birds. Carlyle's "French Revolution" suggested this note: "How strangely, grandly, it reads out here amid sunshine, flowers, birds, simple-hearted countryfolk! Nothing so wondrous as War viewed from Peace." This inspired a sermon on the Prince of Peace. Having occasion to preach for Rev. Henry Slicer in Frederick, I gave them the "Prince of Peace." Whereon this note: "Several committees came to ask if I meant General Scott or General Pierce [rivals for the presidency] when saying I hoped to see the day when we would vote for a man for something better than having 'General' added to his name. I took the Quaker ground, which excited discussion in those that heard, as it must for a while."

Yes, for a while; but some of these questioning friends had sad reason to remember my plea for peace, preached throughout the county. Ten years later their whole region was a camp and their churches hospitals.

As dogmas became dim, while pastoral exigencies remained, I was driven to the deeper study of the human heart, to the real soul in myself and in others, to the conditions and sorrows of life. I made nearer friendships, received confidences, and once christened a child with my own name. An Episcopalian clergyman (I fear even now to name him) discovered that I was not orthodox, and visited me; he was in a similar state of mind.

The only literary man I met in Frederick was Samuel Tyler, who had written a book on Robert Burns, another on the Philosophy of Lord Bacon. I could not get either, but felt sure they were interesting because of a work on "The Beautiful" he was writing, of which he showed me portions in manuscript. The basis of his philosophy of the Beautiful was that Beauty is the

feminine principle of the Universe. He found endless illustrations of this in the feminine personifications of natural beauty—the Dawn, the Moon, Spring, Nature herself—all original, neatly expressed, and pointed with classical quotations.

In my garden, where youth and hope expanded with the morning-glories, and no fruits of knowledge were forbidden, the harmless little garden-snake seemed a symbol of my nascent optimism. In my eighteenth year I came upon "The Celestial Railroad" by one Nathaniel Hawthorne, and was delighted with the travesty of my beloved Bunyan, little thinking then that I should myself ever be filling up the Slough of Despond with volumes of philosophy, or regarding Apollyon as a useful engineer. After that the same magician had beguiled me with "Twice-Told Tales," but now he came into my garden with a volume which made the morning-glories languish and the pretty *Eulania optimistica* darken into a viper. This volume was "The Scarlet Letter." But it requires a chapter to describe the effect of that incomparable work in me, and it cannot be attempted. On the portal of the greater world I was entering Emerson had long been set as Michael Angelo's "Morning," and now Hawthorne took the place of "Night." But it was Night frescoed with galaxies and with wondrous dreams. Heroic Hester Prynne, feeling that what the world called her sin "had a consecration of its own," and gradually haloed by her sorrows, insomuch that the weary and heavy-laden, women especially, brought to her their perplexities and burdens, to find comfort and counsel, was framed in my soul as a picture—and there it is to this day, surrounded with evergreen.

Greatly in need of counsel as to my continuance in the ministry, I confided my doubts to Professor M'Clintock. He agreed with my optimism; it was faith, not scepticism, to believe that "all is for the best." With reference to "Redemption," he thought no particular theory of it was essential. No theological statement had ever satisfied him so much as the voice of Jenny Lind singing, "I *know* that my Redeemer liveth!" With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.

But it was my heart that was rebelling against the dogmas. They were not believed because they were not beloved. I was encouraged to hold on in my circuit for a time by finding that

some highly intellectual Methodists like Dr. M'Clintock, though not themselves sceptical, considered mental doubts about doctrines of small importance. And for that attitude I had the authority of John Wesley himself, who when reproached for publishing the life of Thomas Firmin, the Unitarian philanthropist, said, "I am sick of opinions; give me the man's life!"

Dr. Burnap, Unitarian minister in Baltimore, addressed the Union Philosophical Society of Dickinson College in 1852. In that year the members of our class of 1849 received their M.A. degree. At the close of June my father, a trustee of the college, met me there, and he was troubled about the selection of Burnap, though the address was not heretical. His subject, "Philosophical Tendencies of the American Mind," was ably treated, but I was vexed because he made fun of Transcendentalism.

Among the visitors at Carlisle was Dr. Durbin, and at the table of Professor O. H. Tiffany he (Durbin) and Burnap drifted into a discussion to which my father and other guests were attentive. The question between them was, of course, not doctrinal, but related to the general tendencies of religious thought, which Burnap held to be in the direction of larger liberality. Durbin pointed to the Tractarian movement, to the increasing strength of the Church of Rome, and made a vigorous argument against Burnap's view.

On July 4 I preached in the Carlisle church where five years before I joined the church. The distinguished people who had come for the Commencement and the College Faculty were present. My subject was the "cloud no larger than a man's hand." My father and friends praised me, but one was present who probably felt that the passionate feeling in my sermon was partly due to the cloud no larger than a woman's hand. The turmoils in my mind, the increasing probability that I could not remain in the Methodist Church, and the inconceivableness of a freethinker's marriage with the daughter of a bishop and sister of President Emory, had kept me silent for a year. Also I had felt during all that time that if I were betrothed to Catharine Emory, a hostage beyond redemption would be given to orthodoxy. She had with fairness concluded that the affair between us was at an end, and her engagement with my friend Asbury

Morgan had just been announced. There was a subtle lightning in that cloud which struck something in me deeper than the dogmas with which I had been concerned. From some such experience came the motto of our family, *Fide et amore*. My old faith and first love finally crumbled together. The happier love came with a new temple, but Jehovah was not in it.

And already the foundation of the new temple was laid. That same sermon at Carlisle, then and there composed in my anguish, gave the first expression to a vision risen above all my own negations and the systems they denied. The small cloud was to prove its divine origin, not by theologies and sectarian triumphs, but by feeding hearts athirst and an-hungered for love and righteousness, and, like the cloud that came from a manger in Bethlehem, diffusing the spirit of peace and goodwill on earth. How many of those who responded to my sermon recognised all its implications I knew not, but I returned to my circuit with new hope and strength. Why should I not raise my little cloud, assert the claims of a pure spiritual religion above all dogmas, and trust to its welcome by other famished hearts like mine? I went back eagerly to my garden at Jefferson—my "Seclusaval"—and began writing out a work long sketched on "Jesuitism." It was published in the *Christian Advocate and Journal* in seven instalments, and the historical studies led up to a charge that the evil principle of Jesuitism survived in Protestantism. There was needed a "revival of the protestant spirit"; the right of private judgment must be insisted on, all intolerance of differences of opinion repudiated, and the most poisonous fruits of Jesuitism be recognised equally in Protestantism "when it forbids free thought and free culture among the people." Such latitudinarianism may lead to infidelity, I said, but history shows that more evil and crime result from the suppression than from the recognition of reason, the eye of the soul. "No man was ever injured by truth," said Jerome. And so on, with an extended plea which the Methodist organ printed without alteration or comment.

"I opened," says my journal, "a correspondence with my parents on my scruples concerning the church and my remaining in it. It will every way be sad for them and me, but 'what is that to thee? Follow thou me!'"

On one occasion I was in extreme distress of mind, having to preach at a camp-meeting in the evening. Many distinguished preachers were present, and among them my venerated friend Norval Wilson. I remember my long, solitary walk in the woods trying to think what Christ was left me to preach about in the evening. I felt that Jesus was alive, that he was near me, and that he said, "Poor youth, there is but one thing for you to do. Give up all you have, even your loving friends, and follow your truth as I tried to follow mine, into loneliness and suffering, even unto death. But you are not strong enough for that. You can lament over a figure of romance, the minister without courage to suffer shame beside the woman he loves, branded with a scarlet letter, but you have not the strength even to take the hand of Truth, which involves no infamy. Like a young man I met in Palestine, you will go away sorrowful." Alas, so it was. I said some bold things, but not boldly; they could all turn in the ears of my hearers to affirmations of their commonplace beliefs.

During that sermon I for the first time quite broke down, and my tears prevented me from proceeding for a minute. Encouraging and sympathetic exclamations came from those around me; and after it was all over I walked off into the woods. Norval Wilson overtook me, folded me in his arms, and said, "Monc, I didn't know how much I loved you till you said, 'I feel so weak.'"

Alas, weak indeed! I felt as if I had in my left hand the fabled sword that cleaved iron bars when I needed that sword which passed through a floating veil. I had to pierce hearts that really loved me. I felt Norval Wilson's embrace deeply, but no further words were spoken. He wept with me, then returned into the camp; and I remained where my place lay to the end—"without the camp."

My parents were much agitated by my avowal of doubts and my determination not to continue my ministry beyond the next Baltimore Conference—early in 1853. At the close of October my mental troubles and the distress of my parents began to break down my health, and I arranged for my appointments so as to pass a week with my relatives in Baltimore. My mother's sister Jean was the wife of a merchant there, William Crane, a

leading member of the church (Baptist) of the famous Dr. Fuller. There I was always affectionately welcomed. My many cousins were musical, merry, cultured, and one of them—Anne, afterwards Mrs. Seemuller—reached literary distinction.

To my surprise and delight both Hicksite Friends and Unitarians were holding their annual meetings in Baltimore at the time of my arrival. "I never was more moved than by a sermon from a [Quaker] woman. She was a handsome woman, and the sermon was truly inspired." My journal does not give her name, but I remember that her first name was Violet.

In the conferences of the Unitarian Association the speaker who most impressed me was the Rev. Sylvester Judd, of Augusta, Me. He was the apostle of a new idea among Unitarians—the birthright Church. My intimacy with the Quakers had made this idea familiar, and my ideal church was already one to which every child belonged. It was a joy to listen to Judd's pleading for the general adoption by ministers of the principle that children should be members of their congregations without need of christening, and their faith associated in every child's mind with its innocent gaieties. Sylvester Judd's face was of exceeding beauty; he had a light, clear complexion, blue eyes, and flaxen hair; intellect and kindly feeling were blended in his expression; his cheeks were mirrors to the glow of his enthusiasm, his voice sympathetic with his thought; and there was about his mouth and eyes an infantine expression that rendered the great brow almost a surprise. Judd was an incarnation of the benediction on little children.

At one of the Unitarian meetings I spoke to Dr. Burnap, who remembered our talk at Carlisle. Dr. Dewey was the guest of Dr. and Mrs. Burnap, and they invited me to dine with him. Dr. Burnap called for champagne in my honour. Intellectual and kind Mrs. Burnap was cordial, and the two ministers arranged for an interview next day, when they advised me to enter the Harvard Divinity School.

When I returned to my circuit grievous tidings met me. Becky was at the point of death! This dusky Lydia, who devoted her life to the comfort of the preachers, and while legally property owned us all—alas! she was prostrated by some fatal malady.

Becky was to me an ideal. She seemed to be there to let me and other teachers know what the pure African is capable of. Her quick intelligence, her humour, her humility, and simplicity, candour, unselfishness, her perennial happiness, and indefinable qualities that I never knew in any white person, had made her to me a revelation. I was overwhelmed with grief. Becky had to console me. I do not know whether she suffered much or not, for she smiled and conversed brightly, as I sat weeping beside her, and talking to her of heaven.

Heaven? So long as Becky was well and in her beautiful garden she was sufficiently in heaven. Her death was the end of a little paradise. Mother Rice was taken off to her children, and the cottage closed. Probably I was the last minister that dwelt there. I walked about the garden; it was all desolation; had the pretty little harmless snake that taught me optimism relapsed into the old dragon? A terrible confrontation was here! Whence was this death that struck down a happy and useful young woman, and wrought us all such misery? After all, my optimism was academic; it had not included the death of Becky.

The awfulness of the event was universally felt in the neighbourhood. On Sunday, November 15, when I preached the funeral sermon, the church was filled with mourners, and I could hardly get through my sermon. In pouring out my heart at Becky's funeral I for the first time startled any congregation by a heretical thought. "My brethren," so says my diary, "many of them were astonished at my preaching at Becky's funeral that death was not the result of sin. I had not dreamed of the unusualness of the thought with them. I was sorry I had said it. I maintained my point, albeit they were astonished at my doctrine."

Various incidents determined me to delay no longer my resignation. I remember one particularly. I had preached at Urbanna, my most cultured congregation, and as I was leaving a lady whispered gently, "Brother, you seemed to be speaking to us from the moon."

I might have suffered less had I confided to that dear friend the trouble I was in, but the pangs of my new birth were too severe. I could not think; persons and incidents dominated

heart and mind ; how I dreaded to lose the affection of those sweet women and children !

My final month's round of appointments was a succession of heartbreaks. My last sermon was preached on December 4 at Jefferson, where lay Becky in her garden, my theme being "Eternal Joy." So says my diary ; perhaps it was of joy seen through tears. Next day I passed at Urbanna with families of lovely people. Exchanges of gifts, singing of favourite ballads, evening company, made my last day on Frederick Circuit, and on it my diary inscribed :—

"What would I think of myself if these little girls ceased to love me !

"Farewell ! O how sad to go off ! I bade them all good-bye—gave Annie a kiss—left ! I shall not soon forget you all.

"My horse almost knocked my head off by nearly falling I was thrown."

My homeward journey lay through Rockville Circuit, where I passed a day with my Quaker friends, who did not quite like my plan of going to the Divinity School. "They fear my creed will be *made up*." Uncle Roger feared I was going to assist in building a sort of Babel, but could not refrain from a joke on the fiery names of leading Unitarian preachers—Bellows, Furness, Sparks, and Burnap. My diary notes "a difference of opinion [with W. H. Farquhar] on the subject of Supernatural Christianity I cannot yet give it up. It is too grave a thing to give up quickly and immodestly. I must study it." I alluded to this subject in a conversation with Roger Brooke, who said that a member of Congress visited the neighbourhood many years before and placed in his hand a copy of Paine's "Age of Reason," saying "See if you can answer that !" "I read it," said uncle Roger "and told him that Paine had simply attacked the abuses of Christianity and I was not concerned to answer him." I do not remember the name of the member of Congress. I had never seen the "Age of Reason," and could not then appreciate the incident.

When the papers announced my withdrawal from the Methodist church, it may be that some of those dear people thought of me as having aspired to something grander than life in their loving homes and teaching in their villages. Ah, how mistaken ! Life

with you, sweet friends, if you are living, was beautiful ! I left you with unspeakable grief ; and could you have recalled me in conformity with your loyalty and mine, could you have said, "Come back and tell us freely all that is in your heart !" no tidings could have given me more happiness.

## CHAPTER XI.

Parting from Methodism—Pains of New Birth—John Minor—"The Blithedale Romance"—Last Sermon—Partings—Hearing Thackeray—Dr. Crooks—Theodore Parker—Father Taylor—Ways and Means—My Organ—A Visit to Concord—Hawthorne—First Meeting with Emerson.

ON leaving Washington for Falmouth I again had a narrow escape; on the Potomac bridge my horse was frightened by an approaching steamer and tried to leap into the river, getting almost over.

From December 15, 1852, when I reached the old home at Falmouth, to February 14, 1853, when I left for Cambridge, my old journal is a sort of herbarium of the thorns that pierced father, mother, and myself.

A cruel side of the situation was that my new steps had the appearance of being merely metaphysical. I was breaking my parents' hearts—so it seemed—on abstract and abstruse issues while really I was aiming at a new world. But this new world was of such a serious character—the abolition of slavery, to begin with—that any intimation of it only made the doctrinal heresies more painful.

Once more on Christmas Day I heard the angel singing in old St. George's "Glad tidings of great joy I bring to you and all mankind"; once more I knelt with my parents on watch-night and sang the Covenant hymn, "Come let us anew our journey pursue"; and once more went out on New Year's Day—hiring day—and wrote in my journal:—

I feel to-night somewhat sad. I find how little sympathy I have with the existing state of things. As I saw the slave-hiring to-day I found out how much hatred I had of the institution—and how much contempt for the persons engaged in it. "You look," said my friend, "as if you were not in the world." I am not. My dear relatives and friends cannot sympathise with and encourage the

deepest faith and reverence in my soul. O my Father, do thou love me in this time of fire.

The most notable figure in Fredericksburg was still John Minor. A bachelor past middle age, he devoted himself to his aged and blind mother and to studies. Having occasion to call on him, he proposed a walk. We crossed the bridge of Stafford, strolled on the Washington farm, and talked on philosophy. He smiled at the phrase "dark ages," and thought that in the centuries so labelled there were some of the best heads that ever lived. For himself (Minor) Hobbes was final. Here was heresy more sweeping than I had then dreamed of. My father thought John Minor as good a man as any in Virginia, though his "infidelity" was well known. Why, then, his distress about my heresy? My father said it was due to his great affection for me, and I made that a count in my charge against dogmas. Why should a heavenly Father exact dogmas that cause discord between father and son on earth?

My new ideas on slavery, which I did not proclaim nor conceal, caused my father embarrassment. Holding really the old-fashioned views against slavery "in the abstract," he was by my "abolitionism" not only involved personally, but as the leading layman in the Baltimore Conference in Virginia, then in a struggle with the Methodist Church South, involving property. But my uncle, Judge Eustace Conway, leader of the Southern sect, was too sore personally to use my eccentric position as an argument against the Church North. So excited was he that for once he spoke to me with anger.

The presidential campaign between Franklin Pierce and General Winfield Scott—then just ended—had particularly enlisted two of my uncles: Judge Eustace Conway, who nominated Pierce in the Democratic Convention, had encountered in debate Commonwealth's Attorney, Travers Daniel, the two being warm personal friends. Hawthorne, being the biographer of Pierce, played a leading part in the campaign. Uncle Travers declared that biography the most complete romance ever invented by Hawthorne, while Uncle Eustace could not unreservedly endorse a biographer who admitted that slavery was an evil which Providence in its own good time would cause "to vanish like a dream." I found it painful that Hawthorne should descend into

the arena of contending parties, but he believed that Pierce would make a good President. During the campaign the pro-slavery philosophy made rapid advance. Beverly Wellford (afterward judge), a leading scholar and writer, who three years before held aloof from our Southern Rights Association, had become an extremist in advocacy of slavery and Southernism. The Wellfords were a historic and conservative family, and this change in Beverly denoted a new era in Virginia.

Alas, that a burden should be on me to become an antagonist of these beloved companions of my early youth! But ah, what sustaining visions shone beyond the portal so painfully entered. There lay America freed from chains, slavery, strife; there mankind enlightened, woman emancipated, superstition no more, sundering heart from heart, war ended, peace and brotherhood universal. O Morning and Night, serene on my portal, not the time at hand when Worldsoul shall harmonise with Oversoul?

There beside the Rappahannock, where two years before Emerson had awakened me and set my face to the sunrise, now came Hawthorne with "The Blithedale Romance," sequel to "The Scarlet Letter." The seventeenth-century Puritan, tutoring finest hearts to establish the kingdom of Heaven, had slipped into the nineteenth-century philanthropist, sacrificing human hearts to establish his earthly utopia. What loving hearts will bleed on my own new altar, and prove it built of stone unhewn as any dogma I am abandoning?

Hawthorne's "Hollingsworth" became my type of the former I would not be. Fictitious hells faded, the actual hell appeared; and on my knees I swear that it shall remain my supreme end to save hearts suffering not in eternity but in time, and flesh and blood. Once I was surprised by the sympathy of a lady distinguished for her wit and beauty, the young wife of my cousin John Conway Moncure. Their home was "Inglewood" where my childhood was passed, and it was while calling there that I was, as my note-book says, "laughed at and persecuted about my radicalisms and scepticisms," etc., insomuch that I am often tempted to renounce all opinions but those of the company I am in." The sympathy came from this admirable cousin (*née* Fanny Dulany Tomlin), who confessed that she could

not see the justice of slavery. On a previous occasion she had taken my side against the dogma of endless punishment, supporting her view on the saying of Jesus concerning liberation after the uttermost farthing was paid. I portrayed this lady as Gisela Stirling in my "Pine and Palm."

I mingled a good deal with young men, and participated in the debates of the Young Men's Society in Fredericksburg on general subjects. My most serious trouble was in having to preach once more. The minister (Krebs) being summoned away suddenly, his wife entreated me to take his place for one morning. The sermon was one on Charity, in which I tried to unite the serpent's wisdom with the dove's harmlessness for a congregation unaware of my heresy. My father was conspicuously absent. So ended my Methodist ministry.

As the time approached for my going to Cambridge my father, pointing to a volume, said to me, with emotion: "These books that you read and are now about to multiply affect my feelings as if you were giving yourself up to excessive brandy. I have considered my duty and reached this conclusion: I cannot conscientiously support you at Cambridge. So long as you stay in this house you are welcome to all I have, but I cannot further you in grievous error." These are nearly my father's words, and I replied that his position was just.

On February 14, 1853, before leaving home, I ordered my horse, took a short ride, then hitched him to a poplar in front of our house. I then carried from the house my empty saddlebags and laid them on the saddle. This fine horse and the accoutrements, presented by my father for my circuit, I thus returned. Had he been at home he would have asked me to keep them, but it was characteristic of him to escape from partings. My mother watched all the proceedings of my leaving home with burning cheeks, and my parting from her and my sister, aged sixteen, and my two little brothers was very painful. It also affected me to part with our servants. They were not aware of my new views on slavery, but one, "aunt Nancy," had divined enough to tell me that her husband, Benjamin Williams, had fled to Boston. He did not belong to my father, from whom no servant ever fled. Aunt Nancy had arranged a means by which I could communicate with her.

Several relatives awaited me at the station and bade me an affectionate farewell. Ladies only!

That evening (February 14) I heard Thackeray lecture in Baltimore on the English humorists. He was the first great literary man to whom I had listened, and his noble presence, his simplicity, his felicities of thought and expression, so impressed me that in after years, when I occasionally saw him in London, he still appeared to me as if framed in that hall with all the beauty and intelligence of Baltimore before him.

My relatives, the Cranes, with whom I now passed a week were as affectionate as ever, and I found my many Methodist friends unexpectedly cordial. My diary says: "Saw many friends

talked much about Unitarianism and Trinitarianism. I was much pleased at the absence of all bitterness among my Trinitarian brethren about this matter of mine. Some of them I found were not inwardly what they were apparently. They wished not, to bridge the matter over with Arianism."

In Philadelphia I called first on my dear Professor Crook, then a minister in that city. "He told me that if I would go to Harvard, study faithfully, and call no man master, though being my creed back there, he would subscribe it." I passed that evening with the Rev. Dr. William Henry Furness, with whom I had exchanged letters. It was an ideal home. Mr. Furness was beautiful and gracious, and took an almost maternal interest in me on account of my entrance on a pilgrimage that required parting with relatives and associations. It was a household consecrated to truth, humanity, literature, and art; no one who enjoyed intimacy in it can wonder that the daughter (Mrs. Wister) has attained eminence in literature; that of her sons, William became an accomplished painter, Frank an eminent architect, while Horace is the foremost Shakespearian scholar. Horace was about to enter Harvard College, and I thus had a young friend there to begin with.

On February 25 I started for Boston. Our train suffered a collision, and had not my superstition been limited to the Golden Rule, I might have felt serious about this third accident that had befallen me since leaving my Maryland circuit.

On my way I heard that the Marlboro', in Washington St. had a good hotel with moderate prices. My (

describes it as "a very orderly, pleasant, and orthodox place. They have prayers morning and night, at which a piano with æolian addition is used. The first thing that strikes me hereabouts is the extreme culture of music. After prayers there is singing till bedtime."

On the 26th I took Dr. Burnap's note of introduction to the historian, Dr. Alexander Young. He was cordial, kept me till the afternoon, then guided me to historic places, his conversation being a much-needed instruction. He took me to visit an aged woman who remembered the excitement about the "Boston Tea Party." The young men in her parents' household had been in the riot, and she told me her recollection of their rushing in, and emptying their shoes of tea which they had preserved from destruction for the benefit of their grandmother, dependent on tea.

Nearly a quarter of a century after this I saw some notes about myself by a Methodist preacher of Boston, printed in *Zion's Herald*. He stated that he met me at the Marlboro' Hotel on my first Sunday in Boston, where I had just been to hear Theodore Parker. He stated that I was vexed by the sermon, and intimated that he found me rather homesick for my old Methodism. I could hardly believe this, but find it confirmed in my note-book: "February 27. Went to hear Theodore Parker. His sermon was on Good and Evil Temper. Text, Prov. xv. 17, 'Better is a dinner of herbs,' etc. I don't like him at all, and wish I had worshipped at King's Chapel with Mr. Peabody, whom, with his whole family, I love."

I had been introduced to Dr. Ephraim Peabody by Dr. Burnap, and thus into a charming circle. Dr. Peabody's poetic intellect and sweetness of disposition were enshrined in a beautiful countenance. Mrs. Peabody was one of the much-admired Derby sisters, of whom one married Mr. Rogers, of Roxbury, and another the Hon. Robert C. Winthrop. With these three families I found a gracious hospitality. Dr. Derby (unmarried), the brother of these ladies, and charming as they, had been professionally educated in Paris, but devoted himself mainly to the promotion of musical culture in Boston; he superintended the King's Chapel choir—the finest in Boston. He was a founder of the Music Hall, and my musical enthusiasm was by him befriended with tickets to oratorios and other concerts.

As to my worry at the first sermon I heard in Boston—that of Theodore Parker—I was disturbed by the lack of anything in the Music Hall or in the secular music sympathetic with my lonely and forlorn heart.

In the afternoon I was consoled by hearing at the Seamen's Bethel the famous Father Taylor. I had read the graphic description of him by Charles Dickens ("American Notes"), and had heard that Emerson was his admirer. Someone told me that Taylor was a sort of Arian; also that in a circle of his ministerial brethren where Emerson was spoken of as leading youth to hell, Father Taylor remarked, "It may be that Emerson is going to hell, but of one thing I am certain: he will change the climate there and emigration will set that way."

After listening to his sermon—plain, practical, in no part sensational—I approached Father Taylor and told him I had just left the Baltimore Conference. He urged me to go home with him, and on the way was at first severe about my leaving the Methodist church. I answered that if I could, like himself, be a Methodist and ignore the Trinitarian dogma, I would have done so; but Methodism in Boston differed from that in the Baltimore Conference. The old man relented. "Well," said he, "our Southern brethren *are* very strict about some things of which they know nothing." I then knocked at the door of his heart with the name of Emerson, and it opened wide. He told me, I think, that Emerson was a contributor to the Seamen's Bethel, and at any rate interested me by his account of Emerson as a man, and apart from his writings.

In the evening, at supper with the Ephraim Peabodys, I found that Unitarians were not made for the sabbath. The two daughters—one of whom married Mr. Eliot, now President of Harvard, the other the Rev. Dr. Bellows—were lovely enough to consecrate their festal Sunday, and I found it easy to slip out of Methodist sabbatarianism. After the mirth most of us went to the Music Hall, and what happiness awaited me there! "At night," says my diary, "I heard my first oratorio (*Messiah*). O the ineffable delight! Fifty sermons such as I heard in the same place in the morning could not breathe so much piety and sublimity through my soul as that grand oratorio."

There was something rather hard about Parker's manner at first that may have been due to very natural misgivings. Having found that he was the man most likely to help me fulfil Aunt Nancy's commission, I carried a note of introduction to him from some anti-slavery friend at Cambridge, but even anti-slavery men might be mistaken. A Virginian asking the whereabouts of a negro might properly be met with hesitation, though it did not occur to me. I was courteously received in his large library, where he sat at his desk beneath his grandfather's old musket fixed to the wall. He took down the fugitive's name, etc., and said he would make inquiries, appointing a day for my return. For the rest he showed interest in my experiences, and spoke with such admiration of Emerson that I began to warm towards him. A few days later he went with me through the negro quarters, and I got still nearer to him. I remember, by the way, that a man met us and asked the way to the Roman Catholic church. Parker took pains to inform him, and then remarked, "A heretic may sometimes point a man to the True Church." But he did not smile. At length we entered into the house of some intelligent coloured people, who saluted Parker with the greatest homage, which he received with pathetic humility. "This," he said, "is a Virginian, but an honourable Virginian, who wishes to find one Benjamin Williams, who some time ago escaped from his master in Stafford County, Va., and for whom he has a message from his wife, Nancy Williams. I hope you will be able to discover Mr. Williams."

After a brief consultation with others of the family, the man went out to bring some neighbours, and meanwhile I was quite overcome by the pleasant conversation of Parker with the humble women around him. He spoke sweetly and graciously to young and old. It was all beautiful and touching, and I was ashamed that I had disliked him. The man returned with several neighbours, and having inquired closely as to the fugitive's appearance, they remembered such a man, who was in Canada. A little later I had the satisfaction of sending his address to a free negro in Falmouth, who conveyed it to Aunt Nancy.

When I left home I had a good stock of clothing, 140 books, and about a hundred dollars. I did not doubt that at Cambridge I could make some money by preaching at various places, and

also perhaps by writing articles. But from Dr. Burnap in Baltimore I learned that only Seniors were permitted to preach, and that my studies would not allow time for articles. On learning that my father could not conscientiously support me at a Unitarian school, Dr. Burnap collected among his friends \$160 and said, "It is not a loan, but if in the future you find some theological student needing help you can assist him if you have the means." I thus went on to Cambridge feeling quite rich, and when I entered the Divinity School, had the good fortune to find that an organist was needed in our little chapel. I was equal to the performance of simple pieces, and the Faculty gave me for my services (at morning and evening prayers weekdays) fifty dollars the college year. To this Professor Noyes added from some fund \$40 for my instruction by an accomplished organist, of whom I took lessons twice a week.

And ah, how I loved that sweet little organ! Most of the divinity students could visit relatives from Saturday to Monday, or on other holidays, but in such intervals I visited my beloved organ (filled by a pedal), and, locking the chapel door, solaced my heart with sweet old tunes that alone remained with me from Methodist days, and which surrounded me with a "choir invisible," but not in any invisible world—choirs that were still chanting in Virginia, in Maryland, and at Carlisle.

May 3, 1853, is a date under which I wrote a couplet from Emerson's "Woodnotes":—

'Twas one of the charmed days  
When the genius of God doth flow;

for on that day I first met Emerson. Dr. Palfrey, on finding in our conversations that it was Emerson who had touched me in my sleep in Virginia, advised me to visit him. I felt shy about invading the "spot that is sacred to thought and God," but he urged me to go, and gave me a letter to Emerson. I knew too well the importance of a morning to go straight to Emerson's house, and inquired the way to the Old Manse. It was a fortunate excursion. The man I most wished to meet was Emerson; the man I most wished to see was Hawthorne. He no longer resided at the Old Manse, but as I was gazing from the road down the archway of ash-trees at the house whose

"mosses" his genius had made spiritual moss-roses, out stepped the magician himself. It has been a conceit of mine that I had never seen a portrait of Hawthorne, but recognised him as one I had seen in dreams he had evoked. At any rate, I knew it was my Prospero. Who else could have those soft-flashing, unsearchable eyes, that *beauté du diable*, at middle age? He did not observe me, and as I slowly followed him towards the village, doubts were awakened by the elegance and even smartness of his dress. But I did not reflect that Prospero had left his isle, temporarily buried his book, and was passing from his masque to his masquerade as consul at Liverpool and man of the world.

Hawthorne was making calls before leaving for Europe.

I felt so timid about calling on Emerson—it appeared such a one-sided affair—that I once turned my steps towards the railway station. But soon after twelve I knocked at Emerson's door, and sent in Dr. Palfrey's letter, with a request that I might call on him during the afternoon. The children came to say that their father was out, but would return to dinner at one, and their mother wished me to remain. The three children entertained me pleasantly, mainly in the bower that Alcott had built in the front garden. I was presently sent for.

Emerson met me at the front door, welcome beaming in his eyes, and took me into his library. He remembered receiving a letter from me two or three years before. On learning that I was at the Divinity School and had come to Concord simply to see him, he called from his library door, "Queeny!" Mrs. Emerson came, and I was invited to remain some days. I had, however, to return to college that evening, and though I begged that his day should not be long interfered with, he insisted on my passing the afternoon with him. When we were alone, Emerson inquired about the experiences that had led me away from my Methodism, and about my friendships. "The gods," he said, "generally provide the young thinker with friends." When I told him how deeply words of his, met by chance in an English magazine, had moved me while I was a law student in Virginia, he said, "When the mind has reached a certain stage it may be sometimes crystallised by a slight touch." I had so little realised their import, I told him, that they only resulted in

leading me to leave the law for the Methodist ministry. It had been among the Hicksite Quakers that I found sympathetic friends, after entering on the path of inquiry. He then began to talk about the Quakers and their inner light. He had formed a near friendship with Mary Rotch of New Bedford. "Mary Rotch told us that her little girl one day asked if she might do something. She replied, 'What does the voice in thee say?' The child went off, and after a time returned to say, 'Mother, the little voice says, no.' That," said Emerson, "starts the tears to one's eyes."

He especially respected the Quaker faith that every "scripture" must be held subject to the reader's inner light. "I am accustomed to find errors in writings of the great men, and it is an impertinence to demand that I shall recognise none in some particular volume."

The children presently came in—Ellen, Edward, and Edith. They were all pretty, and came up to their father with their several reports on the incidents of the morning. Edith had some story to tell of a trouble among one or two rough families in Concord. A man had hinted that a woman next door had stolen something, and she had struck him in the leg with a corkscrew. Emerson summed this up by saying, "He insinuated that she was a rogue, and she insinuated the corkscrew in his leg." Ellen perceived the joke, and I many times remarked the quickness with which, while not yet out of girlhood, she appreciated every word of her father.

The dinner was early; the children were with us, and the talk was the most homelike and merry that I had known for a long time. When the children were gone, Mrs. Emerson told me that they had been christened. "Husband was not willing the children should be christened in the formal way, but said he would offer no objection when I could find a minister as pure and good as the children. That was reasonable, and we waited some time; but when William Henry Channing came on a visit to us, we agreed that he was good enough to christen our children."

While Emerson was preparing for the walk, I looked about the library. Over the mantle hung a large copy of Michael Angelo's "Parcæ"; there were two statuettes of Goethe, of whom also there was an engraved portrait on the wall. After-

wards Emerson showed me a collection of portraits—Shakespeare, Dante, Montaigne, Goethe, and Swedenborg. The furniture of the room was antique and simple. There were four long shelves completely occupied, he said, by his MSS., of which there must have been enough to furnish a score of printed volumes.

Our walk was around Walden Pond, on both sides of which Emerson owned land. Our conversation related to the religious ferment of the time. He said that the Unitarian churches were stated to be no longer producing ministers equal to their fore-runners, but were more and more finding their best men in those coming from orthodox churches. That was a symptom. Those from other churches, having gone through experiences and reached personal convictions strong enough to break with their past, would, of course, have some enthusiasm for their new faith. But the Unitarians might take note of that intimation that individual growth and experience are essential for the religious teacher. I mentioned Theodore Parker, and he said, "It is a comfort to remember that there is one sane voice amid the religious and political affairs of the country." I said that I could not understand how I could have tolerated those dogmas of inherited depravity, blood atonement, eternal damnation for Adam's sin, and the rest. He said, "I cannot feel interested in Christianity; it seems deplorable that there should be a tendency to creeds that would take men back to the chimpanzee." He smiled at the importance ascribed to academic terms. "I have very good grounds for being Unitarian and Trinitarian too; I need not nibble at one loaf for ever, but eat it and go on to earn another." He said that while he could not personally attend any church, he held a pew in the Unitarian church for his wife and children who desired it, and indeed would in any case support the minister, because it is well "to have a conscientious man to sit on school committees, to help town meetings, to attend the sick and the dead."

As we were walking through the woods he remarked that the voices of some fishermen out on the water, talking about their affairs, were intoned by the distance and the water into music; and that the curves which their oars made, marked under the sunlight in silver, made a succession of beautiful bows. This

may have started a train of thought related to the abhorrence I had expressed of the old dogmas, to which I had added something about the Methodist repugnance with which I had witnessed in Maryland some Catholic ceremonies. "Yet," he said, "they possess beauty in the distance. When one sees them on the stage—processions of priests in their vestments chanting their hymns at the opera—they are in their place, and offend no sentiment."

I mentioned a task set me at the Divinity School, to write an essay on "Eschatology," and Emerson said, "An actually existent fly is more important than a possibly existent angel." Again presently: "The old artist said, *Pingo in æternitatem*; this *æternitatem* for which I paint is not in past or future, but is the height of every living hour."

When we were in a by-way among the bushes, Emerson suddenly stopped and exclaimed, "Ah! there is one of the gods of the wood!" I looked and saw nothing; then turned to him and followed his glance, but still beheld nothing unusual. He was looking along the path before us through a thicket. "Where?" I asked. "Did you see it?" he said, now moving on. "No; I saw nothing. What was it?" "No matter," said he gently. I repeated my question, but he still said smilingly, "Never mind, if you did not see it." I was a little piqued, but said no more, and very soon was listening to talk that made my Eschatology seem ridiculous. Perhaps the sylvan god I had missed was a pretty snake, a squirrel, or other little note in the symphony of nature.

My instruction in the supremacy of the present hour began not so much in Emerson's words as in himself. Standing beside the ruin of the shanty Thoreau built with his own hands and lived in for a year at a cost of twenty-eight dollars, twelve and a half cents, Emerson appeared an incarnation of the wondrous day he was giving me.

My enthusiasm for Margaret Fuller Ossoli, excited by her "Memoirs," led Emerson in parting to give me a copy of her "Woman in the Nineteenth Century"—an English edition she had sent him from London, with her initials in it. At my request he added his own name and the date.

That evening I sat in my room in Divinity Hall (No. 34) as

one enriched, and wrote : " May 3. The most memorable day of my life : spent with Ralph Waldo Emerson ! "

Two days later I attended a great dinner given in Boston to Senator Hale of New Hampshire. I went over with Dr. Palfrey, who was chairman. Emerson was there, but when Palfrey called for a speech from him he had departed. What was my chagrin, on my return to the Divinity School, to find that Emerson had been there to call upon me !

## CHAPTER XII.

Summer at Concord—Thoreau—Oriental Books—Persian "Desatir"—  
The "Rose Garden" of Saadi—Hon. Samuel Hoar—Judge Rock-  
wood Hoar—Elizabeth Hoar—Mrs. Ripley and the "Old Manse"—  
Goethe—William Emerson—Concord Children—A Spiritist Adven-  
ture—Agassiz at Harvard College—Agassiz, Alcott, and Emerson  
in Symposium

Being homeless in the North, my summer vacation (1853) was passed at Concord. The Emersons found for me a very pleasant abode at "Hillside," on Ponkawtasset Hill, about a mile out of the village, where Ellery Channing once lived, and where he wrote his poem on New England. Two sisters, the Misses Hunt, educated ladies, received me into this pleasant cottage, where I was the only boarder. These ladies were cousins of Miss Martha Hunt, whose suicide in Concord River and the recovery of her body are described in Hawthorne's "Blithedale Romance." They were troubled because G. W. Curtis, in his "Homes of American Authors," had suggested that Martha's suicide was due to the contrast between her transcendental ideals and the coarseness of her home. They described the family of their cousin as educated people. One of these sisters walked with me to the river and pointed out all the places connected with the tragedy, and some years later another cousin drowned herself there.

Emerson introduced me to his friends. First of all he took me to Henry Thoreau, who lived in the village with his parents and his sister. The kindly and silent pencil-maker, his father, John Thoreau, was French in appearance, and Henry resembled him physically; but neither parent impressed me as possessing mental qualities that could account for such a rare spirit as Henry. He was thirty-six when I met him. He received me pleasantly, and asked what we were studying at Cambridge. I answered, "The Scriptures." "Which?" he asked. Emerson

said, "You will find our Thoreau a sad pagan." Thoreau had long been a reverent reader of Oriental scriptures, and showed me his Bibles, translated from various races into French and English.

He invited me to come next day for a walk, but in the morning I found the Thoreaus agitated by the arrival of a coloured fugitive from Virginia, who had come to their door at daybreak. Thoreau took me to a room where his excellent sister Sophia was ministering to the fugitive, who recognised me as one he had seen. He was alarmed, but his fears passed into delight when after talking with him about our county I certified his genuineness. I observed the tender and lowly devotion of Thoreau to the African. He now and then drew near to the trembling man, and with a cheerful voice bade him feel at home, and have no fear that any power should again wrong him. That whole day he mounted guard over the fugitive, for it was a slave-hunting time. But the guard had no weapon, and probably there was no such thing in the house.

The next day the fugitive was got off to Canada, and I enjoyed my first walk with Thoreau. He was a unique man every way. He was short of stature, well built; every movement was full of courage and repose; his eyes were very large, and bright, as if caught from the sky. "His nose is like the prow of a ship," said Emerson one day. He had the look of the huntsman of Emerson's quatrain:—

He took the colour of his vest  
From rabbit's coat and grouse's breast;  
For as the wild kinds lurk and hide,  
So walks the huntsman unspied.

The cruellest weapons, however, which this huntsman took with him were lenses and an old book in which to press plants. He was not talkative, but his occasional monologues were extraordinary. I remember being surprised at every step with revelations of laws and significant attributes in common things—as a relation between different kinds of grass and the geological characters beneath them, the variety and grouping of pine-needles and the effect of these differences on the sounds they yield when struck by the wind, and the varieties of taste represented by grasses and common herbs when applied to the tongue.

He offered me a peculiar grass to chew for an instant, saying, "It is a little sharp, but an experience." Deep in the woods his face shone with a new light. He had a mental calendar of the flora of the neighbourhood, and would go some distance around to visit some floral friend. We were too early for the *hibiscus*, a rare flower in New England, which I desired to see. He pointed out the spot near the river where alone it could be found, and said it would open about the following Monday, and not stay long. I went on Wednesday or Thursday, but was too late—the petals were scattered on the ground.

Thoreau ate no meat; he told me his only reason was a feeling of the filthiness of flesh-eating. A bear-huntsman he thought was entitled to his steak. He had never attempted to make any general principle on the subject, and later in life ate meat in order not to cause inconvenience to the family.

On our first walk I told him the delight with which I read his book, "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers." He said that the whole edition remained on the shelf of his publisher, who wished to get rid of them. If he could not succeed in giving them away they would probably be sold as old paper. I got from him valuable hints about reading. He had studied carefully the old English Chronicles, and Chaucer, Froissart, Spenser and Beaumont and Fletcher. He recognised kindred spirits in George Herbert, Cowley, and Quarles—considering the latter a poet but not an artist. He explored the old books of voyages—Drake, Purchas, and others—who assisted him in his circumnavigation of Concord. The Oriental books were his daily bread; the Greeks (especially *Æschylus*, whose "Prometheus" and "The Seven against Thebes" he translated finely) were his luxuries. He was an exact Greek scholar. Of moderns he praised Wordsworth, Coleridge, and to a less extent Carlyle and Goethe. He admired Ruskin's "Modern Painters," though he thought the author bigoted, but in the "Seven Lamps of Architecture" he found with the good stuff "too much about art for me and the Hottentots. Our house is yet a hut." He enjoyed William Gilpin's "Hints on Landscape Gardening." He had read with care the works of Franklin. He had as a touchstone for authors their degree of ability to deal with supersensual facts and feelings with scientific precision. What he admired

Emerson was that he discerned the phenomena of thought and functions of every idea as if they were *antennæ* or *stamina*.

It was a quiet joke in Concord that Thoreau resembled Emerson in expression and in tones of voice. He had grown up from boyhood under Emerson's influence, had listened to his lectures and his conversations, and little by little had grown this resemblance. It was the more interesting because so superficial and unconscious. Thoreau was an imitator of no mortal; but Emerson had long been a part of the very atmosphere of Concord, and it was as if this element had deposited on Thoreau a mystical moss.

During that halcyon summer I read the Oriental books in Emerson's library, for he not only advised me in my studies, but insisted on lending me books. To my hesitation about taking even to Ponkatasset the precious volumes, he said, "What are they for?" In my dainty little room, whose window opened on a beautiful landscape with the Musketaquit wandering through it to the Merrimac, or perhaps seated in the vine-covered veranda, I read Wilkins' "Bhagavat Geeta," which thenceforth became part of my canon. Close indeed to my heart came the narrative of the charioteer (the god Krishna in disguise) driving Arjoona to the battlefield, where the youth sees that his struggle is to be with his parents, teachers, early companions.

Emerson also introduced me to the Persian "Desatir." In lending me this he said that he regarded the ancient Persian scriptures as more intellectual than the sacred writings of other races. I found delight in these litanies uttered in the beginning of our era, amid whose exaltations there was always the happy beam of reason. "Thy knowledge is a ray of the knowledge of God." "O my Prophet ever near me, I have given thee an exalted angel named Intelligence." "How can we know a prophet? By his giving you information regarding your own heart."

Emerson also in that summer introduced me to Saadi of Schiraz, who has been to me as an intimate friend through life's pilgrimage. For the "Rose Garden" (Gulistan) I had been prepared by my garden in Frederick Circuit, my "Seclusaval": Saadi was its interpreter, and restored it to me. For I could not enter deeply into wild nature, but dearly loved a garden.

One day when I was walking with Emerson in his garden, he stopped near a favourite plum and said, "This is when ripe a fruit of paradise." He then discovered one that was ripe and managed to pluck it for me. How simply was this man fulfilling all my youthful dreams! He personally loved Saadi, and later edited the "Gulistan." One day he told me he had found somewhere a story about him. Saadi was travelling on foot towards Damascus, alone and weary. Presently he overtook a boy travelling the same way, and asked him to point out the road. The boy offered to guide him some distance, and in the course of conversation Saadi spoke of having come from Persia and from Schiraz. "Schiraz!" exclaimed the boy; "then perhaps you can tell me something of Sheik Saadi of Schiraz." The traveller said, "I am Saadi." Instantly the boy knelt and with tears kissed the hem of his skirt, and after that could not be parted from Saadi, but guided and served him during his stay in Damascus.

(And lo, here I am with my grey hairs seeing my own Saad as he told me the little tale that filled my eyes, all unconscious that my soul was that of the Damascus boy and was kissing the hem of his garment!)

I made the acquaintance of several elderly persons in Concord who told me incidents related by their grandparents concerning the Concord fight of April 19, 1775, but I was too much interested in the heroes of 1853 to care much for those of the old Revolution. One day Emerson pointed out to me across the street the venerable Hon. Samuel Hoar and his daughter Elizabeth, and told me the story of their visit to Charleston, S.C. (1844), the eminent lawyer being commissioned by his State to plead for the release of Massachusetts seamen seized from ships and imprisoned there because of their colour. Amid threats of violence the lawyer and his daughter were driven out of Charleston unheard. I had not known this, and thenceforth bowed low whenever I passed the old lawyer. Without any historic halo the Hon. Samuel Hoar would have arrested the attention of a stranger not only by his very tall thin form and the small face—blonde and beardless—that looked as if come out of Bellini's canvas, but by his dreamy look and movement. He was seventy-five, but his eyes were so absorbed that he seemed to be looking at something far away.

it was this as well as the face that suggested to Emerson a resemblance to Dante. "He is a saint," said Emerson, as the old gentleman passed one day; "he no longer dwells with us down on earth." There could hardly be a greater contrast than that between the old man and his son Judge Rockwood Hoar. The "Jedge," as Lowell calls him in "The Biglow Papers," made an admirable attorney-general of the United States, but his force was almost formidable in little Concord. One felt in meeting him that the glasses on those bright eyes were microscopic, and that one was under impending cross-examination. He was rationalistic and a "free-soiler," though his anti-slavery record did not satisfy abolitionists.\* The judge was unconscious of the satirical accent in his humour. He was personally devoted to Emerson, who, however, rather dreaded him, as he told me half-humorously, on account of his tendencies to remorselessly logical talk. The judge, however, was very amiable in his family, and especially with his sister Elizabeth. The death of Emerson's brilliant brother Charles, to whom Miss Elizabeth was betrothed, was the pathetic legend of Concord, and the reverential affection of Emerson for her represented a sentiment of the community. But the lady, in a sense widowed, was interested and active in all the culture and affairs of Concord; her sorrows had turned to sunshine for those around her.

Mrs. Ripley, the widow of the Rev. Samuel Ripley, a kinsman of Emerson, occupied the famous "Old Manse." An admirable sketch of her life was written by Elizabeth Hoar. She had a wide reputation for learning. I had heard at Cambridge that when students were rusticated they used to board at Concord in order to be coached by her. She was a fine botanist. A legend ran that Professor Gray called on her and found her instructing a student in differential calculus, correcting the Greek translation of another, and at the same time shelling peas, and rocking her grandchild's cradle with her foot. But never was lady more simple and unostentatious. In her sixty-third year she was handsome, and her intelligent interest extended from her fruit-

\* A severe criticism on Judge Hoar by Wendell Phillips was resented even by Emerson. The judge was asked by Sanborn whether he was going to the funeral of Wendell Phillips, and replied, "No, but I approve of it."

trees and poultry to the profoundest problems of her time. Thus the Old Manse had for me precious "mosses" which Hawthorne had not gathered. Her daughters Phœbe and Sophia (afterwards wife of Professor Thayer of Cambridge) always met me with a friendliness gratefully remembered. No doubt they and other ladies in Concord bore in mind that I was far away from my relatives. I found in Mrs. Ripley an intelligent sympathiser with my religious ideas. She was a Theist through recognition of a supreme Reason intimated in the facts of individual reason. She said, "I cannot believe in miracles, because I believe in God." The subject of spirit manifestations was considered by her worthy of study only as a contemporary illustration of the fallaciousness of human testimony wherever emotions or passions are involved. "People believe when they've a mind to," she said.

The well-informed rationalism of Mrs. Ripley, and of her nearest friend Elizabeth Hoar, led me to suppose that the ideas of Emerson were universal in Concord. In this, however, I presently discovered my mistake. One day when I was with Emerson and his wife he referred to Goethe, and I perceived that the great German was a sort of bogey to her. She quoted verbatim two sentences from a letter written to her by her husband before their marriage, in which he expressed misgivings about Goethe, beneath whose fine utterances he had found "no faith." Emerson was silent, and his wife went on in a way almost pathetic to describe her need of faith.

When after the talk at dinner I was walking with Emerson he said that Goethe had written some things—"Elective Affinities," for instance—which could be really read only by minds which had undergone individual training. He was the only great writer who had turned upon the moral conventions demanded by what right they claimed to control his life. Few people with eyes could not omit Goethe.

Mr. William Emerson, an eminent lawyer of New York, occasionally visited his younger brother in Concord. I remember him as an interesting gentleman, and was surprised to find any lawyer with his unworldly and even poetic look. In a letter from Germany of William Emerson shown me by his son Dr. Emerson of New York, he speaks of his acquaintance with Goethe. William was studying divinity, but found that he

not even Socinian faith enough to preach, and was in distress about the disappointment to his parents. Goethe advised him not to disappoint them, but go on with his ministry.

I think the Goethean cult at Cambridge and Concord had cooled. And by the way there was a droll relic of it in the Emerson household; one of the children—Edith, I think—had the fancy to name her handsome cat “Goethe.” Emerson affected to take it seriously, and once when the cat was in the library and scratched itself, he opened the door and politely said, “Goethe, you must retire; I don’t like your manners.”

I managed to make friends with the Concord children. Never had small town a more charming circle of lovely little ones. The children of Emerson, of Judge Rockwood Hoar, of the Loring and Barrett families, mostly girls between ten and twelve years, were all pretty and intelligent, and as it was vacation time they were prepared for walks, picnics, boating, etc. Other of their elders beside myself found delight in the society of these young people, especially Thoreau. He used to take us out on the river in his boat, and by his scientific talk guide us into the water-lilies’ Fairyland. He showed us his miracle of putting his hand into the water and bringing up a fish.\* I remember Ellen Emerson asking her father, “Whom shall we invite to the picnic?” his answer being “All children from six years to sixty.” Then there were huckleberrying parties. These were under the guidance of Thoreau, because he alone knew the precise locality of every variety of the berry. I recall an occasion when little Edward Emerson, carrying a basket of fine huckleberries, had a fall and spilt them all. Great was his distress, and our offers of berries could not console him for the loss of those gathered by himself. But Thoreau came, put his arm around the troubled child, and explained to him that if the crop of huckleberries was to continue it was necessary that some should be scattered. Nature had provided that little boys should now and then stumble and sow the berries. “We shall have a grand lot of bushes and

\* The bream, which has the peculiarity of defending its spawn. Thoreau would find some spot where he could see the spawn, then place his hand beneath it. The bream placed itself over its spawn, and his fingers closed around it.

berries on this spot, and we shall owe them to you." Edward began to smile.

Not far from "Hillside" resided a lonely old man, with whom I exchanged greetings. Bereft of wife and children, he found consolation in "spiritualism." The Hunt ladies thought that he was suffering his cottage and garden to fall gradually into ruin because of his absorption in another world, and giving his money to a medium for bringing him communications from his wife and children. He was eager to convince me, and said that if I would visit Mrs. Freeman in Boston, and did not find something worth examining in this matter, he would not go there again. Whereupon I went off to Boston and Mrs. Freeman.

Ushered into the mysterious presence, I found a substantial dark-eyed sibyl seated on a little throne. I was placed in a chair opposite by her husband, who, having made passes between us, left the room. Her eyes were closed, and she drew long breaths. Presently she cried, "Where shall I go with you—to the spirit world or to some place on earth?" I said, "Tell me about my home," for I knew that no one in Boston could know anything of my home in Falmouth or my personal affairs. This woman then went on to describe in a vague way my father's house, a description that would apply to many brick houses. She then mentioned several persons in the house and incidents I was sure were not true. I was so disgusted at the whole affair that I cut short the interview and went back triumphantly to my old friend at Concord. The old man went to see the medium and she said that she found me so sceptical that the *rapport* was imperfect. The old man, however, fulfilled his contract.

Mrs. Freeman had said, "I see a lady who is a good deal worried about somebody named John." The selection of a name so common rather amused me; but I afterwards had to show my neighbour a letter from my mother saying that she was troubled by the betrothal of a relative named John.\*

\* In later life Madame Renan, after the decease of her husband, told me that some intelligent ladies of their acquaintance once came to him with marvellous narratives of some incidents in séances in Paris. When he intimated incredulity one of the ladies said, "But your friend Madame Renan said that she saw it herself." "Ah," said Renan, "so few people

From Agassiz I derived great benefit. When he rose before us in his class, a rosy flush on his face indicated his delight in communicating his knowledge. His shapely form, eager movements ("his body thought"), large soft eyes, easy, unconscious gestures, and sonorous English, with just enough foreign accent to add piquancy, together made Agassiz the perfect lecturer. He was skilful, too, as a draughtsman, and often while speaking made a few marks on the blackboard which conveyed a complete impression of the thing elucidated.

In the warmer months Agassiz used to take his class out into the country, there being no difficulty of finding in the neighbourhood places of scientific interest. Several times we visited Nahant, and I can never forget the charm of our sitting there on the rocks while Agassiz pointed out on them the autographs of the glaciers recording their ancient itinerary. Or, standing on the top of some boulder, he would trace with his finger in the rocks far out in the sea the ancient outlines of the land; or with some small fossil in his hand, or peculiar shell, he would track the progress of organic development.

On one ramble at Nahant Agassiz devoted himself to the sea-serpent, which had twice been reported as seen off that coast. One of our class had unintentionally suggested the subject by mentioning the recent apparition, and smiling at it as a sailor's yarn. But Agassiz, in his always good-natured way, said that although there were no doubt exaggerations, it was not quite safe to ridicule the story. He then proceeded to give a summary of all the narratives about the alleged monster, with references to time and place that amazed us, as the subject was of casual suggestion. He described huge snake-like saurians of which some may have been amphibious or aquatic, and whose extinction might not be complete.

One day in his lecture-room Agassiz displayed some new fossils, mainly of saurians, which had just been added to his collection. They gave him a text for a general review of the morphological chain of reptilian life. As he proceeded, darting

know how to see!" Nearly these same words were said to me by Mrs. Sarah Ripley in the Old Manse in Concord.

Emerson had little patience with "spiritualism," which he called "the rat-hole revelation."

off at times to his blackboard, and comparing the extinct form with contemporary fauna, he became more and more animated, his face reddening with excitement, until at last he said: "Gentlemen, I ask you to forgive me if to-day I end my lecture at this point, although the hour is not out. I assure you that while I have been describing these extinct creatures they have taken on a sort of life; they have been crawling and darting about me, I have heard their screaming and hissing, and am really exhausted. I regret it, gentlemen, but I trust that you will excuse me."

Our admiration for the great teacher was such as to break through all rules, and we gave him a hearty cheer. He bowed low to us and quickly disappeared.

The determined repudiation by Agassiz of the discovery of Darwin caused something like dismay in scientific circles throughout Europe as well as in America. Concerning this I have some memories that may interest men of science. When I belonged to the class of Agassiz (1853-54), he repeatedly referred to the hypothesis of continuous development of species in a way which has suggested to me a possibility that he may have had some private information of what was to come from Charles Darwin. In his Introduction (1859) Darwin speaks of having submitted a sketch of his work to Sir Charles Lyell and Sir Joseph Hooker "the latter having seen my sketch of 1844." Either of these or Darwin himself, might have consulted Agassiz. Most of us knew about such a theory only through the popular "Vestiges of Creation," to which he paid little attention. He seemed to have been excited by some German—perhaps Schopenhauer, in whose works the idea of self-evolution in organic nature is potential—of whom he spoke with a flush of anger when adding "He says himself that he is an atheist." At any rate, during 1854 especially, his mind was much occupied with the subject. I also remember well that during this time he often dwelt upon what he called the "ideal connection" between the different forms of life, describing with drawings the embryonic changes in that progress appearing no unbridged chasm after the dawn of organic life.

At the end of every week a portion of the afternoon was given for our putting questions to Agassiz; the occasion often

giving rise to earnest discussion. These repeatedly raised the theory of development in "The Vestiges of Creation." Agassiz frequently referred to the spiritual evolution with which Emerson was particularly associated. But just after Darwin's discovery had appeared, I happened to be dining at the Saturday Club in Boston, when something like an encounter between these two friends occurred. Agassiz was seated at the head of the table, Emerson being on his right. It was near the end of the dinner, and around the long table those present were paired off in conversation; but being next to Emerson I could enjoy the conversation he held with Agassiz. After a time the professor made some little fling at the new theory. Emerson said smilingly that on reading it he had at once expressed satisfaction at its confirmation of what he (Agassiz) had long been telling us. All of those beautiful harmonies of form throughout nature which he had so finely divined were now proved to be genuine relationship. "Yes," said Agassiz eagerly, "ideal relationship, connected thoughts of a Being acting with an intelligent purpose." Emerson, to whom the visible universe was all a manifestation of things ideal, said that the physical appeared to him one with the ideal development. Whereupon Agassiz exclaimed, "There I cannot agree with you," and changed the subject.

There was at Concord a course of lectures every year, one of which was given by Agassiz. His coming was an important event. He was always a guest of the Emersons, where the literary people of the village were able to meet him. On one such occasion I remember listening to a curious conversation between Agassiz and A. Bronson Alcott, who lived and moved in a waking dream. After delighting Agassiz by repudiating the theory of the development of man from animals, he filled the professor with dismay by equally decrying the notion that God could ever have created ferocious and poisonous beasts. When Agassiz asked who could have created them, Alcott said they were the various forms of human sin. Man was the first being created. And the horrible creatures were originated by his lusts and animalisms. When Agassiz, bewildered, urged that geology proved that the animals existed before man, Alcott suggested that man might have originated them before his appearance in his present form. Agassiz having given a signal

of distress, Emerson came to the rescue with some reconciling discourse on the development of life and thought, with which the professor had to be content, although there was a *souffçon* of Evolutionism in every word our host uttered.

There was a good deal of suspicion in America that the refusal of Agassiz to accept Darwin's discovery was due to the influence of religious leaders in Boston, and particularly to that of his father-in-law, Thomas Carey, who had so freely devoted his wealth to the professor's researches. Some long intimacy with those families convinced me that there was no such influence exerted by the excellent Mr. Carey, but that the old Swiss pastor Agassiz' father, was surviving in him. He had, indeed, departed far from the paternal creed; he repudiated all miracles at a time when Mr. Carey and other Unitarians upheld them tenaciously. He threw a bomb into the missionary camp by his assertion of racial diversity of origin. His utterances against Darwinism were evidently deistic, and had nothing whatever to do with any personal interest, except that he had a horror of being called an atheist.

I say "deistic," for "theistic" denotes a more spiritual conception of deity than I can associate with Agassiz. He had adopted Humboldt's "Cosmos" idea, attached a dynamic deity to it, but did not appear to have any mystical or even reverent sentiment about nature, and pointed out humorously what he called nature's "jokes." I was sometimes invited to his house. He had by his first wife two beautiful daughters and the son (Alexander), now eminent. His wife and her sisters were ladies of finest culture and ability. Agassiz was a perfect character in his home life, and neighbourly also. Occasionally he would get together the young girls of Cambridge and guide them among the fossils, telling them all the wonders of the primeval world. Longfellow told me that Agassiz was entreating him to write a poem on the primeval world.

### CHAPTER XIII.

Concerts and Theatres—Mr. and Mrs. Jared Sparks—The Longfellow—J. R. Lowell—Dr. Palfrey—Rev. Dr. Andrews Norton—The Plymouth Rock Myth—Theodore Parker—Professor Convers Francis—Professor G. R. Noyes—The Unitarian Clergy—Emerson at Divinity Hall—His Influence on Students.

THE three hundred dollars I carried to Cambridge, which would have been affluence in my Methodist circuit, swiftly diminished in value. Some half-starved tastes were awakened in me. I heard for the first time symphonies of Beethoven; in Boston Museum Theatre I witnessed the inimitable comic acting of Warren;\* here were new kingdoms, but with ticket offices at their frontiers.

The most momentous experience was the first opera. It was at the Howard Athenæum, then the grand place, and I was invited by the Longfellow to a seat in their box. This first opera was "Somnambula"; the second was the "Barber of Seville"; but the third—oh, the third! It was dear Mrs. Sparks, wife of the historian, who invited me to "Don Giovanni." She had never seen that opera, and I fear could not enjoy it because she had taken me (a sort of *protégé*) to what she described to her husband on our return as a travesty of Byron's "Don Juan" and quite as immoral. A startling thing to me was the discovery in Mozart's melodies of several hymn-tunes. The charm of Sontag's singing—the music, especially the minuet—held me under a spell. I never got free from it, and to this day regard "Don Giovanni" as worth all other operas together.

My love of concerts and theatres requiring economy, I joined four other impecunious divinity students in forming a vegetarian table. Our only married student, Fowler, and his wife were

\* I have never seen the equal of Warren as an artist in that line. With a facial expression and some slight movement—such as turning around—he could without a word convulse an audience.

glad to help support themselves by supplying us in their house. There were half a dozen of us at table. Fowler was the only "spiritualist" in our college, and the rest of us represented rationalistic phases of faith, each in an individual way; so our table did not lack spice.

Jared Sparks, the historian, was president of Harvard College when I arrived, but soon resigned, and was succeeded by Rev. Dr. James Walker. Mr. Sparks had long given up his ministerial profession, to the great benefit of American history. I had been especially confided to his kindness by Drs. Burnap and Dewey, and was admitted to a sort of intimacy in his family. His remains in my memory among the most charming personalities I have known. Seated there in his library with his historical documents, he was the ideal scholar and statesman. His countenance had the candour and simplicity of a child, and though grave almost to melancholy, a sweet smile now and then played over his features, and his gentle voice was winning. In reflecting on my acquaintance with Jared Sparks I always remember what Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes said to me some years before his death: "You and I have spent many of the best years of our lives merely clearing theological rubbish out of our path. Because I was so occupied still in my twenty-first year I was prevented from availing myself of my opportunities for gaining from the patriarch of American history the knowledge for which I had to search long in later life. I remember, however, that he repeated to me a suggestion of Thomas Paine to Jefferson, that Christ and his disciples were modelled on the sun and zodiac. Indeed, it was from Jared Sparks that I first learned that Thomas Paine was to be respected.

Mrs. Sparks was a lady of culture and originality. She continued her evening receptions after her husband's presidency ceased, and in her house the best people were met. It was there that I met Arthur Hugh Clough, the English poet, charming across the Atlantic by Emerson. His figure was unique as poetry. Someone at the time told me that there had been some doubt as to the pronunciation of the name, and on his appearance Mrs. Sparks had greeted him as Mr. "Clow." When he was taking leave she repeated this; and Clough, after going to the door, returned and said to her in good humour but

emphasis, "Cluff, madam, Cluff!" This handsome blonde Englishman often passed Divinity Hall on his way to visit the Nortons at "Shady Hill," just back of us, and he seemed to make more classic our pretty avenue. "The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich," lent me by Emerson, was touched with melancholy, but Clough's face was always serene.

Had I to describe the Cambridge I knew in a phrase, it would be as the Town of Beautiful Homes. I suppose my coming so far from my relatives, and my parting with Virginia for love of religious and political liberty, led some to invite me to their homes. Among these were the Longfellows. I find in my note-book: "March 13, 1853. Spent the evening with Longfellow! O what an event! I found him in every way worthy of his works, with a sweet and smiling family around him. A pleasant young English lady was there—Miss Davies. Topics—Modern Authors, Personalities of Boston, etc., and mainly of Virginia and Slavery, about which the English lady was anxious." This is a wretched little note about my introduction to Craigie House, and across all the years my memory is better. For I remember the grace and graciousness of Mrs. Longfellow, and thinking that she was the lady described by the poet in "Hyperion." She possessed a peculiar kind of beauty, which I think inspired the familiar engraving "Evangeline," and a most engaging expression of sincerity and of thoughtfulness for others. When anyone was conversing with her the intentness of her dark eyes, as if she listened with them, and the humility with which after a little silence she expressed an opinion always intelligent, never conventional, impressed me that first evening. I longed for her friendship. She loved to walk on the large swards fronting Craigie House, and it was a picture to see this tall lady among her trees and flowers. She had much quiet humour, and I remember her quaint description of old Mrs. Craigie, from whom they purchased the house. Some had tried to persuade her to have her trees tarred to protect them from the caterpillars, which also invaded her neighbours. She refused to be so cruel to the caterpillars, saying "They are our fellow-worms."

She was the poet's second wife, but the difference in their ages was compensated by his possessing the greater youthfulness of spirit. He was quick and vivacious in his movements, and

was even gay at times, though I never remember him laughing aloud. Her brother, Tom Appleton, a cosmopolitan wit, used often to pass his Sunday evenings at Craigie House, and I had a standing invitation to pass Sunday evening there. It was a delight to listen to Tom Appleton's talk, and I had often to indulge in my Virginian liability to loud laughter—I and the children—but Mrs. Longfellow only beamed her amusement and the poet must have sympathetically caught her serene way.

At that time Longfellow was the professor of poetry in Harvard College. Some of the professional students availed themselves of the general college studies, and I joined the classes of Agassiz in science, of Bernard Roelker in German, and of Longfellow in poetry. With the poet we went critically through Goethe's "Faust." It was charming to listen to Longfellow's reading. Even German became musical in his voice, and it was a fine experience to witness the simplicity and elevation with which he interpreted for us without prudery the whole human nature of the poem, as well as its frame of folk-lore and mythology. Longfellow's knowledge of folk-lore, antiquities, superstitions—Scandinavian, English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, American (aboriginal)—was universal, and had he not eclipsed his learning by the popularity of his poetry, he might have founded a chair for such studies.

Longfellow's personality was potent among us. His modesty, his amiable man-to-man manners toward the young, the absence of airs or mannerisms, his transparent veracity of mind and respect for all sincere opinions, were very engaging. He was universally beloved. I heard Lowell's address at the unveiling of Longfellow's bust in Westminster Abbey; and although everyone present seemed to feel that the perfect word had been spoken, I felt that with all the elegance of the eulogy it did not—perhaps none could—convey the characteristics that made Longfellow's personality finer than his poems.\*

Now that I have mentioned Lowell, it may here be added that at the time he was generally known only by his "Biglow Papers" and his "Fable for Critics." They were unique in

\* Joseph Jefferson tells me that when dining with Robert Browning in London, 1877, the poet said Longfellow was as charming a gentleman as he had ever met. "Browning's enthusiasm for a man whose poetry was so remote from his own impressed me," said the actor.

## CHAPTER II.

Our Homestead "Inglewood"—School—Conway House, Falmouth—Our Mulatto Hero—Falmouth and its Millionaire—Party Contests—Family Legends—My Conway Grandparents—"Erleslie"—Methodism.

IN my second year my father purchased a large farm and homestead two miles out of Falmouth, called "Inglewood," and it is there that my remembrance begins. Through life it has remained with me as a "Lost Bower," and the only house I ever built (Bedford Park, London) bore that name. "Inglewood," Virginia, was a two-storied frame house, with a long veranda, opening on two acres of sward and flowers enclosed by an ever-green hedge. Beyond the hedge on one side was an orchard of white heath peaches, on the other many varieties of apples. In our fields grew melons, in the woods huckleberries, chinquapins, hickory nuts; and indeed I can think of no charm wanting to our little Avalon. My brother Peyton, two years my senior, and myself had the freedom of the adjacent farms—"Sherbourne," residence of a spinster cousin, Sarah Daniel; and "Glencairn," home of a beloved uncle and aunt (Richard Moncure, whose wife was my father's sister), their many children being our constant playmates.

But before all the playmates I remember the comely coffee-coloured face of my nurse, Maria Humstead, nearly always laughing, as if I were a joke. Her affection was boundless, and her notions of discipline undeveloped. "Come, Monc, 'fess your faults," and an outbreak of laughter, were all that met my infant mischief.

My father and uncle Richard Moncure united in providing a teacher for us—Miss Elizabeth Gaskins (originally Gascoigne), a niece of grandfather Conway. To this gracious lady, who instructed me five years, I owe much. Her school was held for a time in my father's office in our garden. The earliest incident in my memory is of my father and uncle Richard visiting the

American literature, and genuine New England products. Meeting him in later years I received an impression that he did not like to be alluded to as "author of the Biglow Papers," but it is only his works written under that same inspiration that strike me as possessing originality.

Mrs. Charles Lowell, his widowed sister-in-law, introduced me to Lowell, and he received me pleasantly; but there was a certain provincialism about him which I suppose irritated my own Southern provincialism; and perhaps both my lingering Methodism and heretical enthusiasm prevented my getting very far with Lowell. Despite his long beard, pointed moustache, and wavy hair parted in the middle, in those days suggestive of foreign style, his look, accent, shrewdness, all recalled the "Yankee" conventionalised in Southern prejudice. Although this son of an eminent Unitarian minister had depicted so felicitously, in his "Fable for Critics," Emerson, Parker, and other leaders of thought, he did not seem to have any knowledge of their thoughts nor much interest in the great problems that filled the air with discussion. He took me with him to a beautiful pond near Cambridge, where we had a fine bath, and showed himself an admirable swimmer.

I had enthusiasm for Robert Browning, but Lowell showed no interest in Browning, and shocked me by echoing the commonplaces about his obscurity. "I own," he said, "a copy of 'Sordello,' and anybody may have it who will put his hand upon his heart and say he understands it." "I have not read it," I replied, "but what is it about?" Placing his hand over his heart, he answered, "I don't know." I presently read "Sordello," and found it obscure because of my ignorance of the epoch in Italian history with which it is interwoven, but there are enough clear and profound passages in the poem (so I thought) to excite something more than jest.

Mr. Buckingham, the admirable editor to whom Lowell's "Biglow Papers" were addressed, was passing serene years in his pleasant home with his daughter, and he could not have better company than this bright and gracious young lady.

At an edge of our Divinity Hall park resided Dr. John Gorham Palfrey. Formerly a Unitarian minister and a professor in our Divinity School, his interest in the anti-slavery cause had carried

him into political life and into Congress. His radical attitude in Congress had cost him his seat, and he resumed his historical researches. Dr. Palfrey, still an active man—though his children were grown—was very attractive. He was an impressive speaker, a scholar with fine powers of conversation, and rather rationalistic. He had long set the anti-slavery cause above all theology.

The largest homestead in Cambridge—one may call it a park—was "Shady Hill," belonging to the Norton family. The Rev. Dr. Andrews Norton resided there with his unmarried daughters Jane and Grace, and his son Charles Eliot Norton, now (1904) professor of fine arts in Harvard University. Dr. Norton had been the chief professor in the Divinity School, and wrote the text-book of conservative Unitarianism, namely, "The Evidences of Christianity." Being on the side of the enemy, I did not then appreciate the force and learning of this work.

The venerable doctor was a favourite theme of legend in our college. He had the reputation of being very aristocratic. Some student invented a fable of the leading Unitarians entering heaven in a group, with characteristic remarks. Dr. Ware said, "It is better than we deserve"; the elder Channing, "This is another proof of the dignity of human nature"; Dr. Ezra Gannett, "There must be some mistake," and hurries out; Dr. Norton murmurs, "It is a *very* miscellaneous crowd."

Perhaps this idea arose from the old gentleman's historic genealogy, his reputed wealth, elegant park, and the distinguished appearance of his children. His daughters were sometimes seen walking about their grounds, which adjoined our college park; they were beautiful, and spoken of as "The Evidences of Christianity." Once when the two elder were preparing for a visit to Europe, Grace remaining with their father, Dr. Palfrey said to Dr. Norton, "Alas! what will you do when the Evidences of Christianity leave you?" "Ah, I will be saved by *grace*."

Dr. Palfrey advised me to pay my respects to Dr. Norton, and gave me a note of introduction. I did so with trepidation, as he was believed to regard rationalism intolerantly.

Browning's "old king sitting in the sun" came to my mind when I beheld this picturesque scholar in his library, with his halo of silken white hair, his classic features, his clear soft eye.

With my anti-slavery views, Dr. Palfrey's note may have made him acquainted; but as most of the old Unitarians idolised Daniel Webster and opposed the abolitionists, I supposed that the "aristocratic" doctor was on that side too. To my surprise he said early in our conversation that the majority of the Washington politicians seemed to ignore not only the principles of freedom, but even all sense of honour. No compacts were respected and truth was disregarded. Those who refer to the history of the slave power at that time, and its steady corruption of Northern congressmen, will recognise the weight of Dr. Norton's words. I was charmed by the old scholar's candour. In speaking of "Transcendentalism" he made a remark to the effect that what to thinkers (I understood a reference to Emerson) were high ideas of individuality and self-reliance, tended to become in ordinary minds boundless self-conceit.

When Professor Charles Norton was bravely denouncing in 1898 the "inglorious war" which the United States was about to wage against helpless Spain, I gave an address in Boston, before the Free Religious Association, in which I related the above anecdote of his father. I afterwards received a letter from Professor Norton telling me that it had been the custom of his father in their family prayers to utter a special petition against the influence of Theodore Parker's unbelief. But one day he read a report of a sermon delivered by Parker in Boston on the betrayal of freedom by Webster, and from that time there was no more about Parker in the family prayers.

When the elder Channing visited Europe he went to see Mrs. Hemans, whose poems were popular in America, in her home near Windermere. He spoke of her hymn on "The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in New England," and told her that he had heard it sung by a great multitude on the spot where the Pilgrims landed. But when, in answer to her questions, he was compelled to inform her that the coast described in her hymn as "stern and rock-bound" was without any rocks, she burst into tears. In my Southern home, where my mother used to sing that hymn, I too had nursed the heroic legend, and when I made my reverent pilgrimage to Plymouth Rock, a cruel disillusion awaited me. My friend Andrew Russell showed me near the low beach a small stone a yard or so long, and one slightly larger in front

of Pilgrim Hall, the tradition being that the two together had made the original holy Rock. It was as mythical as the Holy Stone of Mecca. It was to be yet a good many years before I discovered the illusions investing the Pilgrims themselves. I credited them with great men around me, whom they would have banished or put to death.

Admirers of Theodore Parker sometimes claimed that he was the typical flower out of the prickly Puritan stem. And after I had come to find that no opportunity of hearing him must be lost, there appeared to me some truth in this. When he sat in front of the great organ while the choir was singing, there was a certain severity about his thin lips, a sternness and pallor on his face and bald head, which suggested the aspect of the Puritan; when he opened his lips his gentle voice wafted to us lilies and roses.

In nearly every sermon of Parker there was some delicately humorous passage which sent a smile or even a ripple of laughter through his eager assembly, but it was only some great inhumanity or injustice that brought forth his sarcasm, and that raised no smile.

Theodore Parker's rejection of miracles recorded in the Bible was not the result of sceptical tendencies but of critical studies. The last time I ever saw him was at Framingham, where the Anti-slavery Society met every summer in a grove. During an interval in the speaking I walked with him to the end of the grove, where we sat upon the grass. I was preparing a sermon on miracles, and noted some of his talk on that subject. He said it was difficult to define miracle. He recognised a sort of miracle-sense in man, who feeds that mystic part of him with legends and fables, as a man who cannot get bread will eat grass rather than starve; but when man has grown so far as to find God in nature, and in the deep intuitions of his own heart, the miraculous fables will be extinguished like rushlights under dawn.

While I loved Theodore Parker and honoured him as the standard-bearer of religious liberty, and derived instruction from his discourses, I received no important aid from his philosophy or his theology. Indeed, none of our class in the Divinity School adopted "Parkerism," but we all felt—and I suspect our pr

fessors felt—that Parker was defending our right to enter on an unfettered ministry. We unanimously resolved to ask him to give the sermon at our graduation. When one or two of us conveyed to Parker this invitation, we were received in his library, where he sat at his desk. The conspicuous musket borne by his grandfather at Lexington was in curious contrast with the tenderness which this captain in a nobler revolution displayed for his antagonists. He was moved by our invitation, and after some moments of silence said, "I should rejoice to do it; but the professors have already been embarrassed at the reputation of your class for radicalism, and this would embarrass them further; get someone less notorious." After some discussion we took his advice, and the address was given by Rev. Dr. Furness, of Philadelphia. After us came a class which, without consulting Parker, invited him to deliver their address. The Faculty having refused consent, and the young men to elect another, the address that year was an eloquent silence.

Parker really brought a sort of judgment day among the Unitarians, many of whom were not conscious of the extent to which they had deviated from the old standards. He told me that Dr. Convers Francis, our professor of ecclesiastical history, had visited him after his first heretical manifesto, and the following colloquy took place:—

F. "I cannot go along with you, Parker."

P. "What's the trouble?"

F. "Oh, you reject the supernatural in Christianity."

P. "Do you believe in it?"

F. "Certainly."

P. "Do you believe that the fish came up with a penny in its mouth?"

F. "Well no, not that."

P. "Do you believe that a fig-tree withered because Jesus cursed it?"

F. "Certainly not."

P. "Do you believe that a man was brought to life four days after his death?"

F. "I do not."

P. "Will you please select some particular miracle in the New Testament which you do believe?"

## THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF

F. "Oh, I accept the supernatural element."

With that, said Parker, Dr. Francis went off. And how many preachers are in that condition?

Dr. Francis was a florid old gentleman, good-natured, tolerant, mystical, and, but for the extent to which his functions had wrapped him in bandages, might have been progressive. He was the brother of Mrs. Lydia Maria Child, whose "Progress of Religious Ideas" was perhaps the earliest attempt to gather together the spiritual expressions of all the races of mankind. We all liked Dr. Francis personally, and derived benefit from his encyclopædic information about the Church and the Fathers, though he was not able to kindle this ancient coal with any present fire, so that we might receive light and warmth from it.

Theodore Parker once said that he asked a friend from Cambridge what was going on at the Divinity School, and the reply was, "One professor is milking the barren heifer and the other is holding the sieve." But in 1853-54 the case was by no means that. Professor George R. Noyes went through the Bible with a well-trained critical instinct, and delivered us from the fallacious method of interpreting scriptures to suit our preconceptions, either pious or rationalistic. His admirable translation of the Book of Job shows his mental veracity. My old "Student's Bible" is marked with notes of his instructions, and in later years, when knowledge is so much advanced beyond what it then was, I often find in them useful suggestions. The fear of giving a push to rationalism on the one hand, or to orthodoxy on the other, never made Dr. Noyes swerve from exact truth.

One morning I entered the lecture-room a few moments late, and Dr. Noyes remarked, with a friendly smile, "It is said of a famous Virginian that he was remarkable for punctuality." As George Washington had never before been held up to me as an example in anything, I did not at the instant comprehend the allusion. The professor had a good deal of humour. He usually confined his wit to anecdotes, but once he repeated to us a conundrum recalled from early years: "What is the difference between Noah's Ark and a down-east coaster? One was made of gopher wood, the other to go for wood!"

Dr. Noyes, while relentless in his "higher criticism," was conservative in temperament. There was a legend that once

his patience with a pro-slavery administration broke down, and that in his chapel prayer he said, "May our rulers be endowed with that wisdom which they *so much need*." But in his class, when dealing with some text relating to slavery, he reminded us of the fable of the competition between the Wind and the Sun to make the traveller take off his coat. He did not believe that any evil could be removed by denunciation, but he thought that any subject might be dealt with in the pulpit, if it was not in a pugnacious spirit.

He also regarded the "Prohibitionists" as unwise, and trusted that we would as public teachers not only be temperate in eating and drinking, but also in our zeal for any reform.

The school was in a fairly flourishing condition. It had in some years had very few students, and it was said that some old minister reported finding there only three seniors, adding, "One is a mystic, one a sceptic, the other a dyspeptic." But we had quite a number, and most of them youths of ability, also hard workers and full of earnestness. We held weekly discussions in our chapel, from which our professors were careful to be absent. The subjects were generally ethical, one of the most excited debates being on the proposed abstention of anti-slavery people from the products of slave labour. One maintained that we should use cotton and sugar to increase our health and strength for the combat against slavery. I gained from that debate the basis of a subsequent reply to an English society's suggestion of such abstention; a mere economic victory over slavery would be akin to a military victory, and would do no good to the slave; only a change of mind and heart in the owners would free the slaves.

With the exception of Father Taylor, the orthodox pulpit had few men of much ability in Boston at that time. Phillips Brooks was as yet a Harvard undergraduate. In the absence of any adequate championship of orthodoxy it fell to certain Unitarians to maintain scriptural authority and supernaturalism, and some of them were strong men. The typical old-fashioned Unitarian was Dr. Ezra Styles Gannett, whose fire and vigorous thought made him eloquent. He lived long enough to be the last of the able and learned believers inspired by Unitarian Christianity. The leading *réactionnaire* was the late Bishop